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Peer who served the borough dies at 86



Lord Gilbert served Dudley

A FORMER MP who represented Dudley borough for more than 30 years has died aged 86.

Lord John Gilbert contributed to the public debate at Westminster for nearly half a century.

He had represented the East Dudley ward from 1974 until 1997 before taking up a seat in the House of Lords.

The politician, who died on Sunday, was the borough's longest serving MP, was known for being a sharp critic of the practices of high street banks, attacking increases of charges and misleading advertising of interest rates.

He was Labour transport minister in the mid-1970s and championed the creation of the M25.

Born in April 1927, he was educated at Merchant Taylors' school, Hertfordshire. He later attended St John's College, Oxford.

He was originally chosen to succeed outgoing MP George Wigg in Dudley, but he lost the 1968 by-election to the Conservative Donald Williams before winning the seat in 1970. His constituency was abolished in 1974 and he served as MP for East Dudley from then until 1997.

He married, in 1963, Jean Olive Ross-Skinner.

He had two daughters with his first wife, Hilary Kenworthy, who he had married in 1950.



Find experts on your doorstep - starts page 34

GRAN FINDS CASH FOR LUKE'S BAIL

by Louise Jew

LUKE Walker could be home from Crete by the end of this week to begin the fight to clear his name after his Cradley Heath grandmother used her life savings to pay his bail.

His father Patrick said the 10,000 euro - £8,522 - bail surety has now been secured and the family can begin making plans to return to Brierley Hill.

Luke was last week convicted in court of causing grievous bodily harm, leading to the death of his 20-year-old girlfriend Chelsea Hyndman on the Greek holiday island three years ago. An eight-year prison sentence imposed by the court was suspended and he immediately lodged an appeal against conviction - on condition that he raised the bail money within 10 days. Patrick, aged 57, said that since he and his wife Lindy had remortgaged their home, his mother Betty Walker, aged 81, had come to the rescue with funds to help raise the bail total needed.

"My mum has posted the bail money for us from her life savings. It's great and we're hopeful that one day we can pay her back," he said.

"It's a good job we've got her, but it's unfair she has got to go through all this at her age," said Mr Walker.

Luke's grandmother had vowed to do everything she could to help her grandson clear his name.

Mrs Walker had broken down crying when she heard the verdict on Luke last week.

She said: "I'd do anything for him, just to have Luke home with his family and friends who love him."

"I'm going to give him the money. It doesn't matter to me. He is my grandson, that's all that matters."

Photographs

Dozens of precious family photographs, including ones of Luke as a young child, adorn the walls of her neat home. Pictures of him grinning with his siblings and cousins and proudly sporting his school uniform are a constant reminder of happier times.

Mrs Walker says her courage has not been broken by the whirlwind developments in the Crete courtroom.

Luke spoke to the press last week following the conclusion of his two-day murder trial, slamming the process as a 'farce' - with judges laughing and one juror falling asleep.

He was initially charged with murdering Chelsea in the party town of Malia, Crete, where they lived together three years ago, but the allegation was downgraded to GBH leading to death.

Luke said he had been devastated. He is expected to face an appeal next year.

● Full story - Page 2

Fly-tipping prompts clean-up



Youth Offending Service team manager Alan John, Councillor Jill Nicholls and resident Steve Jones have been helping to clear land between Crimmond Rise and Stourbridge Road

A COMMUNITY has come together to clean up a beauty spot in Halesowen hit by fly-tippers dumping household waste.

Even electrical goods such as microwaves have been thrown into the fields in the Belle Vale area of the town to the outrage of its neighbours.

Old pushchairs, a bath, a lawnmower, a fish tank, TV set and several glass bottles were also found. It has prompted ward councillors and residents to call for help to tidy the fields.

This includes cutting back overgrown brambles, trees and grass on the land off Crimmond Rise and Stourbridge Road.

Belle Vale ward councillor Jill Nicholls, who led the project, helped to organise the support of Dudley Youth Offending team.

Youths who have been sentenced to work in the community by the courts have been

Traders to put their own ideas on market

STALLHOLDERS are unveiling alternative proposals for a multi-million pound revamp of Dudley's historic market place after objecting to some of the council's plans.

Planning applications have been lodged by Dudley Council for the regeneration scheme but traders are unhappy with some aspects of the proposals.

They have now come up with new suggestions for the layout of the stalls, which are due to be upgraded.

They also want a winding path taking visitors around the pitches. Two meetings will take place this month, the first on June 14, between traders and council officers to work out a way forward on the new suggestions.

The market revamp is one of a number of regeneration schemes on the cards.

A toilet block standing in the high street will be demolished as part of the £6.7m market revamp to open up views of Dudley Castle to shoppers.

Under the initial plans the number of stalls was expected to be reduced from the current 74 pitches with space to be provided so temporary stalls could be brought in on busy days.

Dudley Market Traders' Association chairman Len Lenihan said: "Aesthetics over practicality is not what's needed. As it stands these plans would not be functional."

● Revamp - Page 5

Extension bid rejected

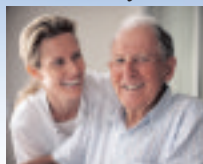
An extension to a Halesowen care home has been rejected by councillors.

Tony Billingham, who owns Lapal House, had submitted plans to replace old garages with a new building to provide short-stay, respite care.

But Dudley Council's planning committee turned down the plans, fearing the green belt would be affected.

Officers recommended the application was turned down because Lapal House, off Lapal Lane South, was within the green belt.

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NEWS

CONTENTS

Peter Rhodes	4
Letters	7
Memory Lane	10
Club News	22
Puzzle Page	28
TV Listings	25-27
Property	29-31
Motoring	32-33
Classified	34-38
Sport	39-40

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Family selling home to pay legal fees

LUKE Walker's parents are putting their family house up for sale to help pay for mounting legal bills in their battle to prove he is innocent.

His father revealed their Brierley Hill home must go on the market. Luke was convicted of causing grievous bodily harm, leading to the death three years ago of his 20-year-old girlfriend Chelsea Hyndman on the Greek island. An eight-year prison sentence imposed by the

court was suspended when he immediately lodged an appeal against conviction – on condition that he raises 10,000 euros (£8,552) bail surety within 10 days. Until the bail money is posted he has to remain in Crete.

But he hopes to be able to come home some time this week after his 81-year-old grandmother, Betty Walker, pledged to donate as much as possible of the bail cash needed.

Patrick Walker and Luke's mother, 61-year-old Lindy, have already remortgaged their Brierley Hill home – but the 'for sale' sign will soon be up outside.

"We will rent somewhere in the area," said Mr Walker, aged 57, who runs Walker's Electrics.

"Selling our house will pay our debts off and the £15,000 to £20,000 will pay for this next trial.

"It will allow us to work without

having to constantly pay off debts. I don't want to sell my house – but it's three years on and we have to keep going to prove Luke is innocent." The case has already cost the family around £300,000 in legal bills and travel expenses for themselves and court witnesses as they fight Luke's case.

"He's not guilty, I know in my heart he's not guilty," said Mr Walker.

Chelsea's mother hoped for answers

THE mother of Chelsea Hyndman has always hoped for answers about how her 'perfect daughter' died.

Just days before the trial began, Heather Hyndman, aged 47, said she was looking for 'some closure' after waiting three years following the death of the 20-year-old in May 2010.

She has said no verdict could bring Chelsea back but she wanted to know the truth about what happened.

Ms Hyndman of Castleford, Yorkshire, was in Crete for the trial with her partner Neil Lorrman.

During the hearing a letter was read out to the court she had written to Luke when he was first in prison before being granted bail.

In it she wrote: "Luke, I know you and Chelsea love each other dearly. I can't believe it's ended like this. I'm sorry I haven't come to see you, I hope you can understand why. There's so many things going through my mind."

Peace

She added: "I hope things work out for you. I hope things will end soon so my baby can rest in peace."

Ms Hyndman had previously spoken of her frustration at the Greek court system and was horrified when Chelsea was mistakenly called as a witness for the original trial hearing in October.

She had struggled to find out what was happening with the trial, which was later adjourned, saying she had faced a 'wall of silence'.

At the time she said the loss of her daughter has left a gap in her life and the family were just trying to get on with life the best they could.

Paying tribute to her daughter, she said: "Chelsea, she just loved life, loved her friends, loved going out at the weekends, going to work, going to the gym, a typical 20-year-old," she said.

"Every morning I wake up and I know that I am not going to be able to see her and touch her and then I just tell myself 'you can get through this day'."

"If you do manage to laugh then you feel guilty because how can you be feeling happy when your daughter is not with you?"

"It's just the worst thing that could possibly happen to a mother."

Convicted Luke hits out at his 'farce' of a trial

LUKE Walker has slammed his murder trial in Crete as a farce – as he spoke of his devastation at being convicted of killing his girlfriend. He said: "I've got nothing to be ashamed of."

The 25-year-old from Brierley Hill, who has always maintained his innocence, has vowed to clear his name. He had denied murder but was found guilty of grievous bodily harm, leading to the death of 20-year-old Chelsea Hyndman. He said the court case was a shambles, with judges laughing and one juror falling asleep.

"The fight to clear my name is not over," he added. Luke, who works with his father Patrick's electrical company, said he had been devastated by the verdict. "I'm lost for words," he said.

He had waited three years for his case to come to court but it took a jury 20 minutes to make a decision about the rest of Luke Walker's life.

Conclusion Luke was convicted of killing girlfriend Chelsea Hyndman at the conclusion of the case, which ended in a 14-hour session lasting until 10.30pm.

Luke was initially charged with murdering Chelsea in the party town of Malia, Crete, where they lived together, but the allegation was downgraded to GBH leading to death.

The court sentenced him to eight years in jail but when he immediately lodged an appeal, the term was suspended to await a new hearing, which could take a year.

The trial heard that Chelsea, of Castleford, West Yorkshire, died after she was taken to hospital with abdominal pains. She died on May 17 2010 from acute peritonitis, having suffered deteriorating health for days.

Greek prosecutors claim she was beaten by Luke. The defence team said the injuries must have been caused when she fell on a cobbled street.

Mr Pyromallis said after the hearing: "Although we have a different procedure in Greece the standard for a fair trial is the same in Greece as in the UK. "And no I don't think this was fair."

Family hunt for internet 'troll'



Convicted Luke Walker with his dad Patrick Walker hunting down internet 'troll'

CONVICTED killer Luke Walker and his father are on the hunt for an 'internet troll' they suspect of writing 'fake' letters to a Greek court, helping to convince jurors to find him guilty.

West Midlands Police are likely to be asked to probe whether a 'troll' who plagued a Facebook site protesting Luke's innocence is the same person who wrote to the court in Crete. Luke and his father Patrick, from Brierley Hill, think that a 'Peter Rogers' and a woman identified only as 'Jessie' – alleged authors of documents produced in the trial – are the same person.

And, if they can prove the letters were forged or faked, they hope it will help to swing an appeal court to overturn the jury's

verdict that 25-year-old Luke was guilty of grievous bodily harm, causing the death of his girlfriend Chelsea Hyndman, aged 20, in Crete three years ago.

Mr Walker, 57, who runs Walker's Electrics in Brierley Hill, said: "We've got an idea that both letters were from the same internet troll, who we think is a woman."

"She was trolling when the Facebook site was up and she started being aggressive. I can't remember what exactly she said – it was just malice, things about Luke and Chelsea."

Organisers of the site later removed the comments made by the troll – a term for a person who leaves malicious or inflammatory statements on websites.

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Police call for aid in drug war

POLICE have called on the community to help them in their war against drug dealers and admitted they need all the help they can get, as officers swooped on properties across the Black Country.

Five suspected drug smugglers were being quizzed following raids in the region. Houses and businesses in Walsall, Wolverhampton and West Bromwich were searched and cash and drugs were seized recently.

The raids were part of an investigation into the trafficking of drugs into the West Midlands and it is linked to the conviction of a West Bromwich woman Akeema Jones, formerly of Thynne Street, West Bromwich, last year after she was found with three kilograms of cocaine hidden in food packages, bound for the UK.

Detective Chief Inspector Simon Wallis, from the force's Gangs Task Force, said: "To succeed in the fight against drugs the police need all the help they can get. I urge people to come forward and report people they suspect to be involved in supply of drugs and those they suspect to be living beyond their means."

Benefits of bistro plan

PROPOSALS to transform an historic former fire station in Dudley into a bistro and bar will bring benefits to the town centre, according to a leading councillor.

Entrepreneurs Shakeel Zafar, aged 39, and Craig Willis, 40, are getting ready to take over the empty building in Priory Street.

The building, which was also previously Carvers Cafe before it closed in the 1990s, will be restored under the proposals.

Councillor Judy Foster, said the plans could be a good step forward to revamp Dudley.

Pets raise cash

MORE than £200 was raised for two animal charities at a microchipping event in Halesowen.

It was organised by Dudley Council and the RSPCA at Huntingtree Park where more than 40 dogs and cats were microchipped. For more information on microchipping call the RSPCA on 01299 861804.

Hundreds more force officers to go in cuts

HUNDREDS more police officers and support staff will lose their jobs over the next six years as the West Midlands force faces an extra £100 million cuts, the chief constable said.

Chris Sims said the public should not be alarmed by the scale of the cuts, which come on top of the loss of 2,200 officers and staff from its 13,500 workforce already.

Private consultants will be brought in to help bosses plan for the future to ensure the force is adequately staffed.

They are already having to save £126m

by 2015 due to a squeeze in Government funding, and Mr Sims said another £100m of savings would be needed by 2019.

"This would be very challenging and would mean hundreds more police and staff jobs having to go, but there is no cause for alarm among the general public," he said.

"That is not a worst case scenario. It is a reasonable guesstimate."

He is confident that recruitment – stopped four years ago – will resume within the next four years although there

will still be an overall reduction in staffing levels.

He is also sure that despite fewer officers, crime, which has plunged by 20 per cent in two years, will continue to drop.

"We have already had a cut of £100m and, despite that, crime has fallen and service has improved," he said.

"Four years ago, people would have said a £100m cut was impossible but we have proved that not to be the case."

"Providing we can keep innovating, we can keep giving the public the reassurance they want. Part of that innovation

has to be the way we work with the private sector." Plans to allow private firms to run some of its core services – including street patrols, guarding crime scenes and collecting CCTV footage – were scrapped earlier this year.

But the chief constable revealed: "We are about to go out to procurement again with a slightly different solution."

"We want to get a private sector partner to help us to find new ways of working. They would help us to bring in the technology and system changes that we would need to deliver them."

Objections over plans for £1m footballing complex

OBJECTIONS have been lodged against plans for a £1 million football complex which will be the next phase of Dudley College's town centre learning quarter.

An all-weather flood-lit pitch and a challenge course is planned which will be open to students, schools and the community. But some neighbours of the proposed site for the development, off Priory Road, fear their peace and quiet will be disturbed.

They have written to Dudley Council to voice their concerns, claiming it will lead to an increase in noise and light nuisance while night matches are being played.

The college plans to have a 9.30pm curfew in place for the pitch during the week and a 5pm curfew at weekends.

Residents have submitted around a dozen letters of objection to planners.

Marilyn Crowther, of Priory Close, said: "This project is an overwhelmingly large development for such a quiet residential enclave as Priory Close where I live."

"It threatens to destroy the calm and tranquillity of the area as noise and light levels cannot be controlled sufficiently and is ongoing during the week and at weekends."

Dr Minal Patel, of Priory Road, said: "The football pitch curfew of 9.30pm during weekdays and 5pm

by Heather Large

during the weekends is considerably later than normal working hours and is unacceptable given that the area is largely residential."

But the scheme has received the backing of Sport England, which said there was 'a local need for this type of football provision'. Dudley College principal Lowell Williams said: "We are disappointed to have received a few objections regarding the redevelopment of the football ground."

"The scheme is designed to a high standard to ensure minimum disruption and careful consideration has been given to reducing the impact on the surrounding area."

The facility will be created on playing fields next to Castle High, funded by the college and through grants.

A decision will be made by Dudley Council within weeks.

Fight starts to save pub

CAMPAIGNERS have vowed to fight plans to convert a popular Halesowen pub into a convenience store amid fears it will cause traffic problems and threaten existing businesses. Petitions against the proposals for The Swan in Long Lane have been distributed throughout the town.

Hundreds have already joined the campaign, calling for the pub, owned by Punch Taverns, to be preserved. But the chain has said the site is no longer viable. The company has submitted a planning application to replace the pub with a store.



Straits Primary School pupil Bradley James, with practice development sister Emma Thoms, left, and fundraiser Jodie McGarry after he won a contest to design a cake to mark the 15th anniversary of the Georgina Unit at Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley

Bradley's message is a piece of cake

IT was a message of hope for the future that touched the hearts of cancer patients at Russells Hall Hospital and won a school boy a prize for his design.

Bradley James, aged seven, entered a competition to design a birthday cake for the Dudley hospital's Georgina Unit as it celebrates its 15th anniversary.

Emma Thoms, practice development sister at the unit, said Bradley, of Straits Primary School in Sedgley, beat more than 120 entries to win the competition.

The 32-year-old, who will share her 33rd birthday with the Georgina Unit on June 8, said: "We short-listed four of the entries and put them up in the chemotherapy patients' waiting area and they voted on them."

"The winning one by Bradley was of a rainbow and in the centre it said: 'for a bright tomorrow'. It was a lovely message and I think that's what the patients liked." Local primary schools were sent invitations to enter the competition and entries came from three: The Straits, Foxyards Primary School, Tipton and Cotwall End Primary, Dudley.

NEWS in brief

Cash boost for museum work

THE Black Country Living Museum has had £500 donated to its learning programme.

Phil Pemble gave the money to the museum on behalf of Perpetua People Development Group, saying the museum was vital in preserving the region's heritage.

Mr Pemble said: "Everyone is fascinated to learn all about the past, in particular how people made a living and how their personal contributions led to the immense success of the Black Country."

Virgin to create 3,300 extra seats

MORE than 3,300 extra seats a day are to be made available on trains between the West Midlands and Scotland.

An overhaul of Virgin Trains' timetable in December will provide a direct link between Sandwell and Dudley and Scotland. It will also deliver the first direct trains from Scotland to Birmingham Airport in six years.

Twenty-four of the 28 Scottish services that start or terminate in Birmingham will be extended to London Euston.

Air ambulance volunteer plea

New volunteers are needed to help raise money for the Midlands Air Ambulance.

The service has 80 volunteers, but with dozens of fundraising events, talks and cheque presentations each week, the fundraising team is looking for more supporters.

Contact the charity's volunteer co-ordinator, Alison Hill on 0800 840 2040.

Call for students to donate goods

UNIVERSITIES across the West Midlands have teamed up with British Heart Foundation shops to launch a scheme to get students donating unwanted items.

For more information call Catherine Argyle on 07775 027325 or email argylec@bhf.org.uk. To find foundation shops visit bhf.org.uk/shops or call 0844 412 5000.

Rubbish blaze

RUBBISH was set alight in an arson attack on a disused factory building in Stourbridge. Firefighters were called to the former Cox Hire site, in Birmingham Street, on May 29.

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NEWS

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RHODES

THERE is a world of difference between artificial intelligence and the real thing. As my email system has been playing up recently, I asked our IT experts to "do the electronic equivalent of rodding the drains", quick as a flash, my email program identified my need, reached into cyberspace and grabbed this advert: "Drains unblocked from £25. No call out fee. OAP discounts."

□□□□□□□□

IT'S hard to define that old expression about somebody's face being a picture. But on Springwatch (BBC2), as Chris Packham described the curious mating habits of slugs, which sometimes involve biting off their own sex organs, Michaela Strachan's face, frozen somewhere between horror and hysteria, was an absolute picture.

□□□□□□□□

I REFERRED recently to the horrors of camping. A reader recalls camping with an old chap who coped with the problem of an over-active bladder by means of a plastic funnel attached to a length of rubber tubing outside the tent. His pals tied a knot in the end of it, which apparently caused much cursing in what are sometimes called the wee small hours.

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THE trouble with May was that it has been too cold, too hot, too calm, too blowy, too dry and too wet. I have a German friend who said he never understood why the Brits spent so much time talking about the weather - until he moved here.

□□□□□□□□

I SUGGESTED recently that the BBC should be funded from taxation instead of extracting its money by means of a vicious, clapped-out licence system. A reader asks: "What about people who don't watch the BBC?" Simple. Under my scheme, people who claim not to watch the BBC and therefore qualify for a tax break are invited to fill out the exemption form Gov23/3343/43/55444/Eng/Wales (2011-2014), omitting section 642 (vii) (b) and subsections ii, iii, iv, xxi and xxiv, plus the first 27 amendments in schedule XXV (excluding all sub-sections following the appeals procedure for Welsh-speaking Somalis). This exemption form, available on the first Friday after Michaelmas at your nearest harbour office, has to be completed in green ink and must be submitted no later than yesterday.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Pair used their home as a fake goods shop

A COUPLE turned their home into a shop selling thousands of pounds of counterfeit clothes, jewellery and cosmetics, a court heard.

Wayne Hinton, aged 40, and Samantha Blizzard, 34, filled their three-bedroom house in Halesowen with £75,000 of fake designer items, and then sold them in a makeshift display room. The pair, who run Mollies Baguette Bar in Oldbury, were caught by trading standards officers after returning from a restocking shopping trip.

Among the 738 counterfeit items seized at the house in Astley Crescent were fake Adidas tracksuits, Superdry jackets, UGG and Hunter boots, Pandora bracelets, Monster headphones and GHD hair straighteners.

The pair appeared at Wolverhampton Crown Court for sentencing after each pleaded guilty to 15 charges of possession of goods with false trademarks for sale or hire and 15 charges of offering and exposing for sale goods bearing a false trademark. Mr Mark Jackson, prosecuting, said the couple were first drawn to the attention of Dudley Council's trading standards following complaints in July 2011.

After receiving intelligence the couple were to refill their stock on December 1 of the same year, a team of officers swooped on their address. They also found £1,410 in cash and notebooks listing customers. Mr Jackson said: "A

by Alex Ross

middle room of the property had been set up as a mini-shop - goods were being displayed around the room on shelves and table tops."

Miss Geraldine Toal, defending Hinton, told how the couple had faced financial pressure after taking over the baguette bar.

Mr Andrew Berry, defending Blizzard, said: "They were trying to make what money they could from the items."

"Clearly they accept there was some profit made, but it was at a low level."

Judge Robin Onions said the pair both deserved immediate prison sentences, but because of the potential suffering for their three children and business he gave them each a 16-month prison sentence, suspended for two years.

The pair were also told to each do 250 hours' unpaid work. They could face financial punishment when they appear for a hearing under the Proceeds of Crime Act later this year.

Baby you can arrive by car



Gemma Meek and Anthony Eccleston with baby Lexi who wasn't prepared to wait and was delivered by her mother in the family BMW outside Russells Hall Hospital, Dudley

ALTHOUGH mother Gemma Meek intended to have her baby in hospital in Dudley, her unborn daughter had other ideas, and she was born on the front passenger seat of the family car.

After her partner Anthony Eccleston parked outside the main entrance of Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital, 23-year-old Gemma realised she could not wait any longer and her baby was well and truly on its way.

As Anthony rushed inside the hospital for help, Gemma sat screaming in agony in the car before giving birth to a baby girl in the front passenger seat of the car.

"It all happened so quick," said Gemma, who is now back home in Walsall with baby Lexi. Anthony ran inside and I tried to keep the baby in, but she pushed and pushed.

"She then pushed three times before I literally caught her in my hands," said Gemma.

Lexi weighed in at 6lb 8oz and was two weeks premature, but after an overnight stay was allowed back with her mother to their home in Elm Bank Road on Monday.

MP calls for fairer deal over force cash

A DUDLEY MP has written to a government finance chief demanding a fairer deal for cash-strapped police in the region.

Further government cuts to the West Midlands Police budget are feared with the limit expected to be slashed again by 2015.

Proposals outlined by Chief Secretary to the Treasury Danny Alexander suggest a further 10 per cent cut to departmental budgets from 2015 will be enforced to help reduce Britain's debt.

It is expected that by 2015, the force will have lost about 2,500 police officers and staff positions because of government cuts, forcing savings of up to £126 million.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin has joined Police Commissioner Bob Jones to demand the West Midlands gets a fair funding deal.

Mr Austin has written to Mr Alexander to urge him to reconsider the proposal and has tabled a series of Parliamentary questions.

Cycle challenge

PEOPLE are being urged to get on their bikes for a hospice which helped a family from Kingswinford. The Severn Valley Cycle Challenge is taking place in Bridgnorth on August 18 to raise money for Acorns Children's Hospice. To find out more call 0844 984 0405.

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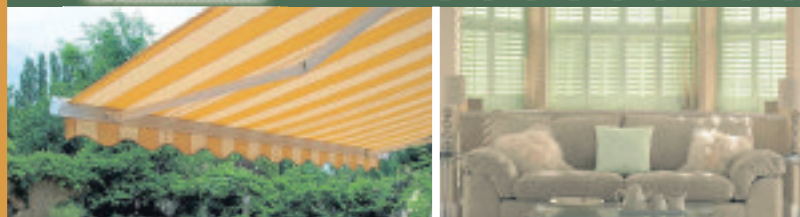
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BOSS VOWS firm to rise from ashes

A FACTORY in Stourport left a burned-out shell by a severe fire will be 'back on its feet' as soon as possible, its managing director has vowed.

More than 70 firefighters were called to tackle the blaze at Pelican Foods, on Sandy Lane Industrial Estate, as 60 tons of waste cooking oil and 500 tons of Kerosene went up in flames.

Firm boss Keith Coldrick said they were still picking up the pieces following the fire at the cooking oil recycling factory last week. But he vowed the business, in Barracks Road, would be back on its feet as soon as.

"I received a call at around 10.45pm to say the factory was on fire. I couldn't believe what I was hearing. It was a total shock," he said.

"The fire was a very serious one, and it has totally gutted the building. The past couple of days have involved meeting with insurers so we can get up and running again. We will get the company back on its feet. We want to be back in business." Mr Coldrick, who also owns 20 per cent of the firm, which has been running for two-and-a-half years, said its 10 staff had been helping out.

Music for free

FREE summer concerts are being staged around Dudley borough until September. The next shows are at Quarry Bank Park which will host Black Country Brass on June 16 and the Black Country Ukulele Players on August 11.

Plans for £6.7m revamp of town's market gather pace

A £6.7 MILLION long-awaited revamp of Dudley's historic market place has moved a step forward after plans to move the Duncan Edwards statue and knock down an ageing town centre toilet block were lodged.

Four planning applications for the project were submitted for approval by Dudley Council today, but chiefs are dependent on a bid for £2.6m from the European Regional Development Fund before work can start. The proposals developed in consultation with market traders, feature a newly-designed square with improved paving and lighting.

Shoplifter's 140 crimes

APROLIFIC shoplifter, who has 140 convictions has been given a suspended jail sentence after targeting two shops.

Stuart Round, aged 24, also breached an anti-social behaviour order banning him from entering Dudley town centre.

Round, who has just finished a 14-week prison sentence for two separate thefts, appeared at Wolverhampton Crown Court last week after pleading guilty to theft, burglary, a breach of the anti-social behaviour order and failure to surrender.

Miss Sarah Allen, prosecuting, said Round, of Wolverhampton Street, Dudley, stole jeans worth £40 from River Island in High Street, Dudley, on February 8.

By entering the store he also breached the three-year anti-social behaviour order.

On the same day Round broke into the staff rooms of Spar in Abbey Road, Lower Gornal, where he got away with £2,923 of cigarettes and £61 cash. Miss Wendy Miller, defending, said Round was now receiving help for an addiction. Mr Recorder Geoffrey Kelly gave Round a 12-month prison sentence, suspended for two years, a three-month night curfew, a two-year supervision order and 200 hours of unpaid work.

They include the repositioning of the Duncan Edwards statue to the other side of the market, on the New Street end.

It would replace an ageing toilet block and be enhanced on a raised stepped plinth.

A new public toilet would be opened at the former Walmsley's furniture store in Castle Street. The council says the knocking down of the toilet would open up views to and from the market place.

Enhanced

It is hoped work will start at the beginning of next year. Under the proposals, the Earl of Dudley statue, in Castle Street, would also be enhanced under a new raised grass bank.

The iconic bronze Green Man sculpture above the archway to Green Man Entry, off Castle Street, would be replaced and lighting installed to the first floor level of River Island to illuminate the town centre's architecture. The council's cabinet last month approved £4.1m of funding for the project. Councillors are now waiting on their bid for £2.6m to pay the remaining amount.

Councillor Judy Foster, said: "I am thrilled we are continuing to move forward with our exciting plans to redevelop Dudley's historic market place and give prominence to our special features in the town centre."

"The planning applications allow us take the next steps in carrying out site investigations." Traders welcomed the regeneration scheme but called for further talks to finalise the designs for the stalls.



An architect's impression of how the market in Dudley could look after the revamp



The Duncan Edwards statue



The enhanced Edwards statue

NEWS in brief

Poster gets to the bones of artwork

CHILDREN who visit the emergency department at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital can enjoy a life size skeleton poster, thanks to an artistic schoolgirl.

Holly Savage, a pupil at St Benedict Biscop CE Primary School in Wombourne, decided to donate the piece of art after she made it for a homework project.

The skeleton, also called Holly, is made from bits and pieces of household objects such as paper plates, a duster, pom-poms, and a bath sponge.

Roadworks will last for two years

TWO years of roadworks as part of a £5 million revamp of Wolverhampton city centre aimed at making it more pedestrian friendly will begin this summer, council bosses have announced.

Wolverhampton City Council is making some roads one-way and will pedestrianise areas including Princess Street. But the plan will ban traffic from turning left from Cleveland Street into Garrick Street.

Charity concert

A CHOIR is to stage a charity concert at a church in Halesowen. Voices in Harmony and their junior Section Pure Harmony will sing at Hasbury Methodist Church in Albert Road on June 8 at 7pm. Tickets are £6 and can be booked on 0121 501 1020.

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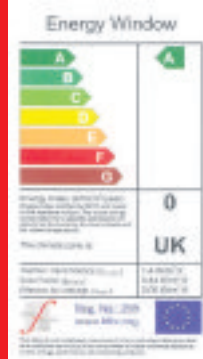
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NEWS FEATURE

IN MY VIEW

WITH
MARK
ANDREWS

SO, after the coldest spring in 51 years, the sunshine has finally put in an appearance.

And where better to spend a sunny Saturday than with a trip to the public refuse tip?

For somewhere you go to dump your rubbish, the tip is a surprisingly image-conscious environment, and one of the last bastions of unadulterated, old-fashioned machismo.

First of all, there has been a raging debate about what one actually calls such attractions.

The moment you roll up at one of these places, there is an acute sensation that everybody is running the rule over you: what you are wearing, what you are driving, and what it is that you have brought to the party. Here, the seasoned pros can spot the bank-holiday DIY-er from a thousand paces.

It helps, of course, if you have the right wheels.

A huge black pick-up truck, preferably with gleaming chrome and garish go-faster stripes is just the job. But if you don't have such a vehicle to hand, and haven't yet bought sufficiently into the Civic Amenities lifestyle to justify the purchase, there are other ways of pulling off the right look.

An A-Team style van is probably trying a touch too hard, but any big 4x4 is good, ideally coated with a liberal spraying of mud.

Rugged

Think well-used Mitsubishi Shogun, Land Rover Discovery and you won't go far wrong, or maybe a large Lexus or BMW X5 if you want to create an air of rugged affluence. But turn up in a Barbie-pink Suzuki and you're just asking to be laughed at.

And, from personal experience, lifting your rubbish from the back seat of a soft-top will result in stares of withering contempt.

It goes without saying that a high visibility vest is de rigueur if you're to blend in, but don't ever wear a shirt underneath it – it will only hide your tan.

Okay, a T-shirt is just about acceptable in winter, but only when it falls below freezing.

And while most waste reception sites do not actually allow builders to dump their commercial waste, a hard hat will boost your cred no end.

And how will you know if you've got it right?

Well there is one simple test. If a member of staff approaches you to check whether you know where to dump your mattress, you've still got plenty to learn.



People checking out the variety of well-stocked stalls



Steve Fenimore who stocks military memorabilia says trade is growing



Marty Street benefited from incentive scheme with his Cartoon Workshop



Adrian Davies sells clothing and his own sculptures

Allsorts of appeal for vintage lovers

As many traders are struggling those in the Antiques Avenue are reporting brisk business as **WILL ACKERMANN** reports

MANY of Wolverhampton's market traders may be struggling along with independent business owners nationwide, but one group appears to be bucking the trend.

Shopkeepers in the indoor market's antiques aisle, called Antiques Avenue, say they are riding the crest of a demand for trendy vintage products.

The row of about a dozen shops is a treasure trove of quirky items you won't find in conventional stores – from hand-made alien sculptures to wartime memorabilia.

Danny's Allsorts, for example, opened in the Salop Street venue 20 years ago. Its name goes some way towards explaining the eclectic variety of goods inside.

Community

And owner Danny Lyner-Jones, aged 54, believes the market remains at the heart of the city all these years on.

He says: "Without markets like ours every city in England would look identical. That's why we attract people from all over the world and all walks of life. The market is all about community, and this market is the heart of ours."

But recently two long-running stalls in the indoor market were forced to close because of dwindling footfall and increasing rents.

The demise of biscuit and cake seller J Phillips and confectionary store Treats N Sweets is a cause for concern even among some of the relatively well-off vintage traders.

Steve Fenimore, who opened military memorabilia and antiques stall Blackfish in February last year, says his trade is growing but admits everything is not all roses.

Although he has not been there long,



Danny Lyner-Jones has an eclectic variety of goods on offer

the 49-year-old from Walsall can see that footfall is not what it should be.

He says: "There's a definite trend for vintage at the moment, 1970s kitsch stuff in particular. I stock some really weird and unusual stuff and I find that sells really well."

"Don't get me wrong, there are bad times. It's like that in business in general. Everyone has bad weeks. I have more good ones than bad though."

"I love the market, but what's wrong with it is the that some traders seem to think they've got this God-given right that people should come in and buy off them. It doesn't work that way. You have to move with the times."

Despite his relative success, Mr Fenimore hopes to move out of the market soon and open a shop in the city centre.

The former security guard, whose father ran an antiques shop in Walsall, says: "It's just a natural progression."

"I do love it here. I certainly won't be leaving because the market's rubbish. But the thing that hinders us is when you come out of the Mander Centre all the buildings are derelict. It loses us a certain amount of trade but it's not the total cause. There are a lot of different factors."

Chief among those raised by many, from both Antiques Avenue and elsewhere in the market, is that new traders

setting up shop are given their first three months rent-free. Furthermore, many of the traders say some are abusing the system by leaving the market after that period ends and returning soon after to claim another free term.

But portrait painter Marty Street, who benefited from the scheme when he launched Cartoon Workshop, says it is a worthwhile incentive, provided people don't misuse it. And while he admits trade could be better, he says he is behind the market for the long-haul.

Mr Street, aged 50, of Walsall, says: "We are not doing badly and we are all happy to stay here as long as the market is around for."

"We are pretty proud of all this and if they ever move us they can move us all together. I think it's an original mixture of stores and the Antiques Aisle is doing better than most. Vintage is right on trend because there's people my age going through a second childhood."

Escapism

Adrian Davies, who opened Hydrophium in February, selling his own sculptures and clothing among other quirky items, believes the trend is down to a fundamental shift in society.

"I think what's happened is the way society's changing people are beginning to reject the mainstream and they find variety in vintage," says Mr Davies, aged 47, of Whittaker Street, Parkfields. "It's escapism really. People find nostalgia in it. I've been coming to this market since the 1980s and I've seen many changes," he adds. "It's quieter now than it was then. People have to watch their pennies more nowadays."

"You also tend to find the antiques section has kind of lost a bit of support since it moved upstairs about four years ago."

"I found trade a bit slow here to begin with, but I think when the sun comes out a lot of people are more willing to come here."

"I'm not turning a profit yet, but for the amount of time I've been here I'm not doing too badly."

THROUGH THE YEARS

1983...

A WOLVERHAMPTON schoolboy was celebrating after being called up to play chess for England. Ten-year-old Dean Whitehouse, a member of Bushbury Chess Club, was one of 40 children picked to represent his country in a challenge match against Scotland.

THE Black Country became a tourist trap as coach loads of visitors took a close look at the history of the area. For a £65 fee tourists from all over the UK spent a weekend enjoying a series of excursions aimed at promoting the region's heritage.

PASSENGERS were taken back in time on an historic bus journey between Dudley and Stafford. The 1969 Daimler Fleetline travelled a long-discontinued route through Tipton, Walsall and Cannock, stopping at all of the original bus stops along the way.

1993...

A KINGSWINFORM bakery cooked up a gigantic bloomer to mark National Bread Week. The Wheatmill Bakery, in Lapwood Avenue, invited customers to guess the weight of the lavish loaf to raise money for charity.

TWO golfers from Cannock were recovering in hospital after being struck by lightning as they sheltered from storms. Don Spring was hurled through the air and Stephen Lloyd temporarily paralysed during the freak accident at Druids Heath golf course in Aldridge.

DRIVING instructors all over the West Midlands were backing the Express & Star's campaign to give P-plates to all newly qualified drivers. The newspaper printed more than 8,000 green and white P-plates in an effort to increase road safety awareness.

2003...

THE tireless community work of a good samaritan earned her a top title within the Wolverhampton voluntary sector. Thelma Fish, aged 74, was named Volunteer of the Year after 38 years of dedicated service within the Portobello community.

HOLLYWOOD superstar Jeff Goldblum visited the Showcase Cinema at the Castlegate leisure complex in Dudley to preview his latest film, *Igby Goes Down*. The actor flashed a mischievous smile as he asked onlookers: "Is that a real McDonald's?"

THE Bishop of Wolverhampton attempted to learn about some of the difficulties faced by blind people by walking around the city centre blindfolded. The event was organised by bosses from the Beacon Centre for the Blind to encourage more people to raise funds for the charity.

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LETTERS

Call to fight closure of The Public

I'VE been involved in the arts and youth work most of my life, starting at Black Patch Park in Smethwick in 1978, and seen the positive effect both have on young people's lives.

As Goldie's manager in the 1980s, I could not have advanced his career without the help of facilities such as Midlands Arts Centre and Wolverhampton Art Gallery, both of which opened their doors to creative work with youngsters from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Having battled for so long, since the days of Jubilee Arts, for the Borough to have decent arts facilities, why must

Sandwell people have them snatched away? With youth work almost non-existent now in inner city communities, where can young people go to express themselves in a positive way?

£1.5 million sounds a lot but in local authority terms it's a small sum to keep the building going for the benefit of the large numbers who have made very good use of it till now.

The other issue is that losing an arts centre from the huge retail development going on around it is shooting oneself in the foot once all the hard work in getting the place established has been done. What is there to distin-

guish West Bromwich from any other shopping centre otherwise?

I've had a Portraits exhibition and a full show at The Public in the past six months and received a huge amount of help and support.

The building is a wonder, inside and out, the staff and management are great, so don't listen to the boosers who would rob the town of its prize possession. If it goes, what else is there of any national note in the Borough, apart from the Albion? So fight the closure now or regret it for years to come!

MARTIN JONES,
Sedgley

Adler car is something of mystery from past

I WAS most interested in Alex Ross's report on Adler cars.

Although I have no knowledge of the Adler featured, I do have a scant knowledge of another.

I was employed as a car salesman at Station Street, Garage Bilston, long since demolished. Salesman, well you cleaned cars, changed wheels etc. during the day, changing into a suit to meet the punters at night, (if you had a suit).

The Adler we had was LHD Olive Green, a cross between a Mini-Moke and a Willys jeep, no hood, no side screens, just 4 seats, the basics. It was a very temperamental starter, however what a motor. How it came to these shores no-one knows. Incidentally there were some real characters in the motor trade in Bilston in those days, making Arthur Daley look like a boy-scout.

M SAXON
Tipton

LETTERS to the Editor

POST

Halesowen Chronicle,
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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

E-MAIL

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How can the HS2 be of national benefit?

I MUST add my thoughts to the present claim and counter-claim, regarding the long-term benefits for the economy of the country with the building of the HS2.

My understanding of being a "benefit" would be that of earning a great deal of money for the country from the rest of the world by the usage of this system. I cannot see how this could be.

So let us look at a few points; will other trains be able to use this line, which I understand, will be a special design for this purpose no junctions, no goods? If this is the case, all that it will achieve is to move a "train" from A to B in a shorter time than the present system. How will this create growth and business for the areas it runs through?

And while we are talking about speed in furtherance to this, what electronic wizardry will be available to our business in the next 10 - 20 years time, when you think of the advances in this field over the past 20 years. I know jobs will be created, but what jobs? It will be just another extension to an already over blown service sector, with no real profit making for the country.

B DOLMAN
Tividale

A theatre would see more use than zoo

I FULLY agree with the letter by Mr Brian Turner May 20.

Hasn't it dawned on the councillors that people usually only visit a zoo or museum once or maybe twice whereas visiting the Hippodrome would be ongoing.

To call the town hall a concert hall is rubbish. I have been to some excellent shows there but the seats downstairs are uncomfortable and the place doesn't hold enough people.

It annoys me that the views of the general public doesn't seem to be taken into consideration.

I am not surprised, however, as it has been nearly 20 years trying to get speedway back in the borough to say nothing of the football/cricket ground were promised.

J HILL
Dudley

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NEWS

1,400 looking for aid to offset the bedroom tax

MORE than 1,400 desperate families and council tenants have applied for emergency handouts to help them cope with the controversial 'bedroom tax', figures show.

Councils in the Black Country, South Staffordshire, Cannock Chase, Lichfield, Stafford and Wyre Forest have received more applications for help in the past month than they had in six months last year.

Latest figures claim there have been 1,267 applications for support with paying rent, called discretionary housing payments (DHPs) in April 2013.

The same councils had 2,102 requests for the whole of the 2012/13 financial year.

Tenants are seeking tens of thousands of pounds to cover their rent following cuts to housing benefit for anyone who has one or more spare rooms.

Under the controversial new measure, dubbed the bedroom tax by critics, people in council or social rented housing with one spare room lose 14 per cent of their housing benefit. People with two or more spare rooms lose 25 per cent.

The Government wants people who are 'under-occupying' to trade down to smaller properties to reduce soaring waiting lists for council homes from families living in cramped accommodation.

But there is a shortage of smaller properties for people to go to. Pensioners with spare rooms are exempt from the charge.

The worst affected area is in Dudley with 529 applications for help.

MP backs Bill on patents

EUROPE-wide laws to help businesses protect their designs and patents have been welcomed by a West Midlands MEP Malcolm Harbour, who represents the region for the Tories, said the Intellectual Property Bill would include the introduction of the new EU Patent. Mr Harbour said: "I welcome this bill."

Sonny proves a belter



Sonny Anderson, aged 13, of Wall Heath, has got his black belt in taekwondo from attending a class at Blakenhall Community College

YEARS of hard work have paid off for a talented young martial artist who has earned a black belt, aged 13. Sonny Anderson rose through the ranks after taking up taekwondo aged five.

Now the keen rugby player has reached the standard of black belt - which his instructor said was a 'great achievement'.

Sonny, of Wall Heath, is a member of the Heart of England Martial Arts group that meets at Blakenhall Community and Healthy Living Centre, Bromley Street.

His instructor Chris Woolcock, who won world championship gold for sparring in 2004, said: "He has done really well. We work towards high standards here and have a strict structure, which I think has helped him get so far."

"He has got very far for his age. I

was 16 when I got my black belt. He balances taekwondo with rugby and other sports and he is very active.

"He also works very hard at school and he is getting good grades there. He has been persistent."

Sonny, a pupil at Summerhill School, Kingswinford, is 'very determined to succeed', his mother Kate said.

She added: "I'm really proud of him. He has stuck at it."

Meetings are held every Tuesday from 7-8pm and the group offers lessons of all grades.

Heart of England Martial Arts - which has groups in Nottingham, Derby, Leicester and Burton-on-Trent - practices the chang hon style of taekwondo.

Email beacontkd@gmail.com or call 07986 502212 to get in touch with the Bromley Street group.

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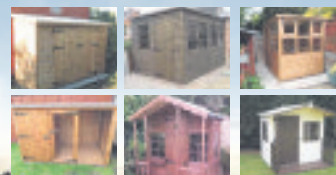
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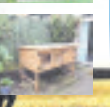
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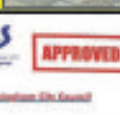
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NEWS

Crash car abandoned



The Nissan Micra car on Birmingham New Road, near Shaw Road, Coseley, which has been abandoned

A WRECKED car was left on the side of a main route through the Black Country – a day after it ploughed into a lamppost at a busy junction.

The silver Nissan Micra was abandoned on the grass verge in Coseley, sparking fears the lamppost could topple over.

The car was involved in a smash with a Ford Ka on the Birmingham New Road at its junction with Shaw Road, leaving a woman driver with minor injuries.

Police insist the car's owner is responsible for moving it as it is not part of a criminal investigation.

Drivers faced tailbacks through Lanesfield and back towards Dudley following the smash at about 12.10pm on May 28 as the traffic lights were out of order.

But the Micra was still on the roadside the next day where it crashed. Police tape has been wrapped around it.

James Senior, aged 48, said he returned home from work at a shop in Birmingham at about 4pm last Wednesday and was 'shocked' to see the badly damaged car.

He added: "Usually accidents like this are cleared up pretty quickly so it seems strange that it would just be left for so long." Police spokesman Lee Page said: "We would only move the car if it's necessary to do so for our investigation, for example with serious road traffic collisions.

"This is only a relatively minor collision and it's down to the owner to remove it."

Head chef planned to profit from selling drug

THE head chef of a pub was caught with more than £1,000 of cannabis he planned to sell on for profit.

Richard Walker, aged 25, was in the house in Paxton Road, Lye, when officers broke in and discovered the skunk, a strong type of cannabis, in the living room and kitchen on January 27. Police, who estimated the street value of the drugs was between £1,175 and £1,675, also found a tin containing plastic bags and a list of names in the home.

Walker, who now lives and works at the Robin Hood pub in Rashwood in Droitwich, appeared at Wolverhampton Crown Court after pleading guilty to possessing cannabis with intent to supply at an earlier hearing.

Miss Sarah Allen, prosecuting, said: "Mr Walker accepted the drugs were his, he is not a user himself – he said he was giving it to his friends. He accepted he was dealing."

Mrs Hina Paw, defending, said Walker turned to drug dealing after finding himself in a 'desperate situation'.

She said: "He had just separated from his long-term partner, he had nowhere to live – he saw this as a way out of the situation he was in."

He had only been doing it for a short amount of time. Now, he is a head chef working at pub, in full-time employment."

Recorder Geoffrey Kelly gave Walker a 26-week prison sentence, suspended for two years. He also put him on a supervision order for 12 months and told him to complete 180 hours of unpaid work. Walker was ordered to pay £400 court costs.

Mr Kelly told Walker: "It would appear that you don't think that the possession of cannabis with intent is a serious matter and you think this sort of offence can be solved with a community order – you are wrong, the possession of illegal drugs is extremely serious."

by Alex Ross

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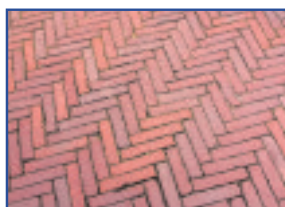


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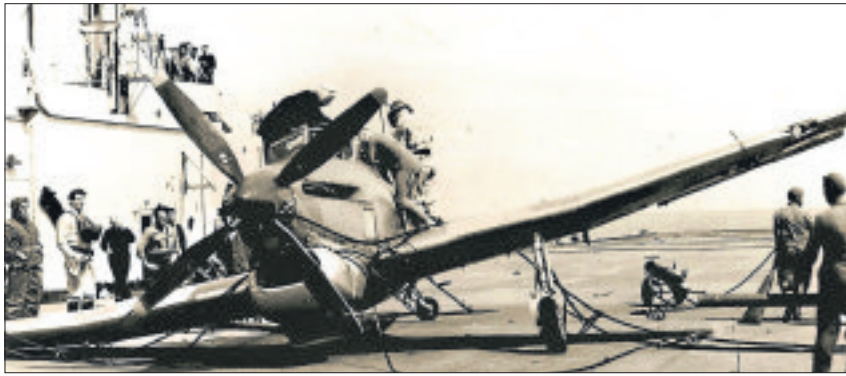
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MEMORY LANE



Aircrew gather around a Sea Balliol after it suffered an undercarriage collapse landing on an aircraft carrier



A Balliol – an advanced trainer – is seen here being test flown from Pendeford



A Balliol preserved in the Sri Lankan Air Museum



The largest surviving part of an RAF Balliol, a cockpit being restored by Staffordshire Aircraft Restoration Team

Balliol brought end to aircraft building

ON 26th October 1954 the last aircraft ever made by Boulton Paul Aircraft flew for the first time.

It was a Sea Balliol, serial WP333 built for the Fleet Air Arm, and was also the last British aircraft to be powered by the famous Rolls-Royce Merlin engine.

This was the engine that had powered the Spitfire and Hurricane in the Battle of Britain.

Boulton Paul had been building aircraft since 1915, firstly in Norwich, and then, from 1936, at Pendeford.

At the end of April the factory at Pendeford was finally emptied ready for redevelopment and an era had come to an end.

The Balliol was an advanced trainer, originally for the Royal Air

by Alec Brew

Force, and initially to be powered by a turbo-prop engine, a jet engine driving a propeller.

In fact, one of the prototypes was the first aircraft in the world to be powered by a single turboprop, but production versions were to be fitted with the trusty Merlin.

This was an engine Boulton Paul was to be fitting to aircraft longer than any other manufacturer, beginning with the first Defiant fighter in 1937, then the 1062 Defiants and 692 Fairey Barracudas during the Second World War.

It was followed with the Balliol, which, as yet another footnote to aviation history, was the last British piston-engined advanced trainer.

Boulton Paul hoped for orders

for 700 Balliols, but in the end only 229 of all versions were built, as the Air Ministry decided to switch to an all-jet training syllabus.

The Balliol equipped one Flying Training School at RAF Cottesmore, and the RAF College at Cranwell, but after around three years was largely retired.

In fact 15 Balliols were scrapped before ever being issued to a unit.

Apart from the RAF and 30 for the Fleet Air Arm, which used them for rather longer, the only other orders for the aircraft were 12 for Ceylon, now Sri Lanka.

After WP333 was delivered the company switched to sub-contracting work, building parts for other aircraft, and the design and production of power control units, the sphere in which it was to specialise.

Now, even the factory where they were built is likely to disappear



The last surviving Sea Balliol is pictured at RAF Cosford



A Balliol in service with 288 Squadron, Royal Air Force – Boulton Paul had hoped to produce 700 planes but only 229 were made

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NEWS

Pair pedal for pounds



Paul Dunn and Jason Addison, who rode from Coseley to Shrewsbury in aid of Birmingham Children's Hospital

A FATHER from Coseley, whose son was struck down with leukaemia, has completed a 50-mile cycle ride to try to help other sick children.

Jason Addison, aged 42 from Somerford Way, set off from his home at 8am to ride to Shrewsbury in aid of Birmingham Children's Hospital cancer ward.

His son Scott, now 18, was treated there for the cancer when he was diagnosed with it aged just five, spending three years undergoing chemotherapy. Although Scott is now in remission Jason, who is the director of Addison Tyres in Princes End, Tipton, is determined to keep raising cash. He was inspired by eight-year-old Joshua Jackson, from Tipton, who is a friend of the family, and is currently being treated for his second bout of leukaemia.

Jason said: "We went through a lot with my son and his treatments, and it's not a nice experience. My son's now in remission, but Josh has relapsed. It's a terrible thing for parents to go through."

Jason undertook the ride recently with friend Paul Dunn, also 42 from Coseley, and raised £500 for the cause.

He said the ride would have been longer, but last year Jason broke his knee when a car pulled out on him.

Now he is planning two mammoth rides – one from London to Paris next year, and then from John O'Groats to Land's End the year after.

Show could be steaming off to find new venue

A VINTAGE steam rally that attracts thousands of visitors to the Black Country could be held in a different venue and removed from council control as a row over funding goes on.

The event in Wolverhampton is paid for by the council – but a parade of vehicles through the city has been scrapped this year to cut costs. Now plans are being drawn up for it to be funded solely by the organisers at a new venue.

by Tim Spiers

Each year dozens of vehicles snake through the city centre ahead of the Steam and Vintage Rally at West Park.

But it has been announced the much-loved parade will be axed this year under cost-cutting moves by Wolverhampton City Council.

Traditionally the vehicles drive along streets lined with onlookers before travelling to West Park for the main event, which attracted up to 40,000 people last year.

One of the organisers Councillor Malcolm Gwinnett has already announced he was quitting this year's event due to the cutbacks.

But he said he was due to return next year – and did not expect the council to be involved.

Councillor Gwinnett, who has helped to set up the

event for 20 years, said it was suggested the show could be held at Wolverhampton Racecourse with council funding, but the organisers felt it would not work.

He said cuts mean it cannot remain at West Park next year – so instead it could become an independently run event.

Councillor Gwinnett said: "We have several locations in mind that we can use but we don't want to say any more until it has been sorted out. We can do it without the council and it will be a better event than we have now."

"They have destroyed the event – it used to be one of the highlights of the year."

Council spokesman Gurdip Thandi said the authority was 'not aware' of the plans.

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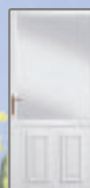


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NEWS

£1m project at golf club ends and brings 10 jobs

A £1 million project to improve facilities at a golf and country club has been completed – creating 10 new jobs.

Three new bars and a restaurant and seven boutique-style bedrooms have been created as part of the overhaul of clubhouse facilities at Bewdley's Wharton Park Golf and Country Club.

An extended golf shop and cafe, as well as improvements to the function rooms, have formed part of the project.

Club managing director, Stacie Umbers, said the next phase of the refurbishment should begin later this year.

Planning permission has already been granted for the creation of a floodlit driving range which will include a golf academy and club-fitting service for members and visitors alike. The club, in Longbank, was taken over in 2010 by businessman Alan Umbers, his wife Anne and daughter Stacie.

They pledged to breathe new life into the club's facilities and said the projects were part of their plans to make that goal a reality. The scheme has seen 10 new staff taken on by the club – including cleaners, greenkeepers, front of house staff and a new chef.

Stacie Umbers said: "When we took over the club three years ago, we identified a number of development areas to concentrate on and how we could make the most of the club."

"We concentrated mainly on our clubhouse facilities and how we could make Wharton Park not just a place for golf but somewhere visitors and members can eat, sleep and relax."

Summer event at park

THE Friends of Springfield Park host their Spring into Summer event at Springfield Park, off Stourbridge Road, Kidderminster, on June 9. The event, which runs from 11am to 4pm, will be packed with free entertainment and activities for all the family such as Punch & Judy, a birds of prey display and Bollywood drummers.

Volunteer groups in frame



Front from left, Mayoress Heather Finch and Mayor of Dudley Councillor Alan Finch with representatives from the Dudley Association of Community Networks at the opening of an exhibition of photographs

A PHOTOGRAPHIC exhibition celebrating the work of 10 voluntary groups in the Dudley borough has been launched.

The display was opened at the Insight House, Pearson Street, Brierley Hill, by the new Mayor of Dudley Councillor Alan Finch.

The event will be on until the end of June. It features pictures of children on the Barnardo's Time for Me Project, volunteers at St Thomas' Community Network and coffee mornings at the Woodside Commu-

nity Centre. The groups are all part of the Dudley Association of Community Networks, which received a £10,000 lottery grant for the project.

Chairman Gerry Clarke said: "We are very proud of what we achieved last year with 144 volunteers giving over 1,600 hours to make sure that each street party and community event was a huge success."

"Now we hope that lots of people will come to our exhibition to support our organisations and find out more about our network."

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Region's wildlife 'is under threat'

THE Black Country's wildlife is in trouble, according to the region's wildlife trust. Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust says six out of ten UK species are in decline, according to a study by conservation organisations and volunteers.

The study is the first of its kind in the UK and reveals 60 per cent of the species studied have declined over recent decades with more than one in 10 in danger of disappearing.

Neil Wyatt, spokesman for the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust said urban, woodland, grassland and heathland, fresh water and wetland species were under threat in the area. He added: "It is time for us to take action to save nature and we are calling on people to give their support. We need as many people as possible to engage with the Nature Improvement Area."

Parry issuing £2m in shares to avoid business being wound up

A TRANSPORT firm in the Black Country is to issue £2 million of new shares to raise research cash and fend off a winding-up threat to its sister company, caused by a £70,000 VAT debt.

The High Court has given Parry & Associates, which launched Parry People Movers Ltd, Cradley a further stay of execution of the bid by HM Revenue & Customs to close it down.

It now has until July 8 to pay off the VAT bill. Parry People Movers, which produced the Class

139 rail buses that transport 500,000 passengers a year across Stourbridge, recently had a revaluation that has added around £2.4m to its balance sheet. On the strength of that assessment, bosses are planning to issue a further £2m worth of new Parry People Movers shares to be offered to its 200 existing backers as well as newcomers.

It comes after Parry & Associates completed deals for up to £30,000 of machines for the construction industry in Ethiopia and Somalia.

Chairman John Parry said: "Shareholders have rallied to loan money towards paying the VAT bill and we are trading ourselves out of the problem. We are as confident as we can be in the

success of the share offer and are proceeding with our research and development work."

The company is pressing ahead with development work to produce a version of the rail bus that is double the size of the existing model, which carries 60 passengers.

It has been buoyed by a pledge of a £1m grant from a regional fund and a further £250,000 technology grant. But the company has to match the funding and is raising it through the share offer.

The firm recently won a £700,000 rail bus order from Turkey and is hopeful of clinching a £1m deal in America. Mr Parry said: "We are gradually getting out of the mire."

Concerns over motorway link

CONCERNS have been raised by an engineering team from the University of Wolverhampton over a planned motorway junction costing almost £40 million that will link the i54 site with the M54.

At a presentation at the institution's City Campus a group of scholars claimed the Staffordshire County Council-backed scheme will cause traffic disruption around junction 2 of the motorway.

Research from the students also predicted considerable tailbacks both north and south-bound on the A449 Stafford Road which could impact on Coven.

Philip Atkins, Leader of Staffordshire County Council, defended the current scheme. He said: "While it is always good to hear the views of our engineers of the future, of course the county council has a highly skilled, qualified team of engineers."

Sweetest moment for the civic couple



Black Country Living Museum demonstrator and Dudley Mayoress Heather Finch with her husband Mayor Alan Finch. A SWEET shop worker at the Black Country Living Museum had a special surprise when a VIP visitor popped in to see her.

Dudley's new mayor, Councillor Alan Finch paid an official visit to the museum, on Tipton Road, to go to see his wife, the new mayoress, in her role as a demonstrator in the sweet shop.

Heather Finch, aged 57, has been working part time in the Victorian sweet shop at the museum for the past two years, after starting there as a guide four years before that. Every week she will don her traditional dress, and sell sweets to visitors as well as make the sweets.

So when Councillor Finch, Labour ward member for Castle and Priory, became the new mayor two weeks ago, he thought it was only right to pay Mrs Mayor and the museum a visit, so she put on her Victorian clothes and newly-acquired chains to welcome him.

Councillor Finch said: "That was the first time I've been to visit her in her workplace. I really enjoyed my visit, and I want to give the museum some publicity."

Councillor Finch, 60, followed in his brother's footsteps when he was elected first citizen earlier this month as his older sibling Ken was mayor in 1998/99.

Scheme saves 1,000 from facing eviction

MORE than 1,000 people have been saved from homelessness in Dudley borough during 12 months, new figures claim.

Around 400 referrals were lodged with a mortgage arrears advice service to help families who feared they could lose their home. Council bosses say there has been a 'steady demand' for the service since April 2012 as people struggle to make ends meet. The service provides advice and support to help people to stay in their own homes.

It was set up in 2006 as a partnership between Dudley Council's housing services and Dudley District Citizen's Advice Bureau in response to the increase in property repossessions.

Help is available for anything ranging from advice about money worries to what to do when someone is served an eviction notice. Councillor Steve Waltho, said: "This scheme is excellent and has made a direct impact upon the quality of life of so many Dudley residents."

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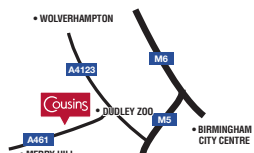
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NEWS

Buildings on old sewage site could be demolished

A DISUSED sewage works could be demolished pending its transformation into a housing estate

Chiefs at Severn Trent Water hope to sell the Caledonia Sewage Works, off Thorns Hill, Stourbridge, for £3 million after winning planning permission to build more than 140 homes there.

But the firm has fears about the former sewage works and has recently introduced 24-hour security at the site to try to prevent trespassers targeting the buildings.

Bosses have also applied for permission from Dudley Council to knock down the works.

Severn Trent Water spokeswoman Sarah-Jayne O'Kane said: "Severn Trent Water has applied for permission to remove the buildings at the site of the former Caledonia Sewage Treatment Works."

"At this point in time, we haven't made a definite decision as to whether to go ahead with the removal of the buildings, but this is one option for making the site safer."

The sewage works was closed down in 1998 following the doubling in size of the water company's other plant at the Roundhill Treatment Works, in Kinver.

Although the housing proposals have outline planning permission, any developer would have to get full planning permission from Dudley Council before starting work on the 23-acre site, which also has six acres of land which is let out for farming.

Any buyer would have to remove the treatment plant and equipment.

Archives are shaping up



From left Mayoress Heather Finch, Mayor, Councillor Alan Finch with Jan Vickers, Pat Morgan and Janet Lea from the Friends of Dudley Archives and Local History Service as they take a tour around the centre

IT may be an empty space now but by January the rooms at a new archives building will be filled with thousands of books and historical documents.

Construction work on the £6 million building in Dudley began in April last year and is due to be finished in August - five months before it is opened to the public.

Around a dozen guests, including mayor and mayoress Alan and Heather Finch and Friends of

Dudley Archives and Local History Service members, were given a tour of the building.

Following the tour, Dudley mayor Alan Finch said: "I think it's a great achievement for the Dudley borough." Friends chairman Jan Vickers said: "It's going to make a great improvement to the service."

Before the tour, a time capsule was buried by the mayor and pupils Euan Gaskin, aged seven, and Daya Kaur, eight.

Are you a member of a local voluntary group?

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NEWS

NEWS

in brief

Volunteers call to help walkers

RAMBLERS in Halesowen are being urged to put their best foot forward and join in a series of walks.

The Healthy Footsteps for 50 Plus, launched by Age UK Dudley last year, is looking for volunteers to become walk leaders.

The programme is for people who have not done much walking before or who have come back to it after a long lay-off.

For more information call 01384 343535 or email leapover50@ageuk-dudley.org.uk.

Five ladies play at coffee concert

THE latest in a series of Coffee Concerts will play host to a theatre group at the weekend.

The monthly meetings at St John the Baptist Parish Church, High Street, Halesowen offer locals to watch a performance and socialise.

This Saturday at 10.15 am Five Ladies and a Piano will play wind instruments and piano music.

Refreshments will also be available and donations will be collected which will go towards the Church fund.

Talking flowers

HALESOWEN Flower Club will hold a demonstration next week. Sue Blandford will present Dewdrops on Roses at Cornbow Hall, Hagley Street, on June 12 at 7.30pm. Admission is £8 and there will be plants, cards and a tombola.

Academy is downgraded in report by Ofsted inspectors

A DUDLEY ACADEMY once rated as good by Ofsted before its school status was changed almost two years ago has been downgraded in its latest inspection report.

Ofsted inspectors have demanded improvements at Holly Hall Academy, Dudley and will visit again within six months to discuss action to boost standards. Some teaching staff were criticised in the report by inspectors for failing to ensure enough pupils achieve top grades in maths and English.

Memorial to remember town vicar

A MEMORIAL service will be held to honour a former Dudley vicar who has died aged 65.

Rev Tony Attwood was priest in charge of Dudley's Top Church for seven years from 2003.

He died in his sleep in April in Nottingham. The service will be held at the church, on the corner of High Street and Vicar Street, on June 24 starting at 1pm.

It will be led by Rev Andrew Wickens, and the Bishop of Dudley, Rt Rev David Walker, will deliver an address. The service will reflect and celebrate Mr Attwood's life and ministry.

Rev Wickens said: "We wanted to give those who were touched by his ministry in Dudley an opportunity to remember him." People who wish to attend should email bishopsoffice@dudley@cofe-worcester.org.uk

The school has been ranked in the 'requires improvement' category this time round. That leaves it in third position on a four-point scale.

But when the academy, in Scotts Green Close, Holly Hall, was a secondary school Ofsted ranked it as 'good' during inspections in 2008 and 2012.

Last year Ofsted changed its inspection system to be more rigorous and to focus on raising the achievements of pupils.

Holly Hall principal Graham Lloyd welcomed the tougher regime, despite the academy's lower ranking, saying it would help drive up standards.

Ofsted lead inspector, Clare Saunders, in her report said Holly Hall required improvement because there were 'too many lessons where students achievement is not good'. She added: "Too few students achieve higher grades in English and mathematics."

Hole lot of effort going into charity golf day



From left, Peter Icke from Gould Singleton with Nicola Hart, from the RSPCA, also from Gould Singleton are Steve Cox with his dog Bella and Steve Bullock

A HALESOWEN firm will be teeing off to support the RSPCA's new regional headquarters with a golf day.

Gould Singleton Architects on Earls Way, was responsible for the design and construction of the centre for the charity and wants to help further by organising the day at Harborne Golf Course.

The golf day will tee off at noon on June 13 with a coffee and bacon sandwich, followed by 18 holes of golf on the exclusive course with a pro followed by a three course meal and charity raffle.

Peter Icke of Gould Singleton, said "As architects and project managers for their new centre in Frankley, we have built up a long understanding and deep appreciation for the hard work and efforts made by the staff behind the scenes at the RSPCA."

The £10 million centre takes in animals from across the West Midlands providing veterinary care and finding homes for the hundreds of animals.

If you would like to take part or sponsor a hole call Helen Tuite on 07715 540518, 0300 123 8567 or bhamfundraising@rspca.org.uk.

£10,000 will fund makeover at garden

MEMBERS of a Halesowen community design studio have won a national competition which means it will have the cash for a much needed garden makeover.

More than £10,000 is to be spent on The Oaks Project garden at Cradley Enterprise Centre in Maypole Fields, Halesowen, which provides support for adults with learning difficulties.

By beating off hundreds of the competitors across the UK, the project has received funding to tidy up their small garden.

Garden design services, labour, furniture and plants will be provided by the competition's organiser Roundup weed treatment.

Chris Self the projects founder set up the project in 2010 to fill a gap left following the closure of two local centres.

He said: "Everyone at the Oaks Project is delighted that we've won this competition."

"We can't wait to have a real garden that we can use for learning and for socialising and one that will be designed specifically for our needs."

"All of the students have plenty of ideas about what they would like in the garden, and we're looking forward to working alongside the team from Roundup to get stuck in to the makeover."

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NEWS

Mother of tragic asthma boy welcomes new policy

THE mother of an eight-year-old boy who died after suffering an asthma attack has welcomed a new drive by health chiefs to keep a closer eye on youngsters with the condition.

The plans, by Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), are aimed at preventing tragic deaths of youngsters such as Owen Jeremy and Brandon Bird, both of Wordsley.

Owen, of Primrose Hill, who enjoyed football and swimming, died on May 24 last year when he went into cardiac arrest in hospital after suffering an asthma attack at Fairhaven Primary School. His mother Rowena said the move was 'fantastic'.

While Brandon, of Rushall Close, died after a chronic asthma attack in April 2011, just five days short of his eighth birthday.

The CCG has now drawn up new guidelines to ensure patients are followed up for treatment.

Chief quality and nursing officer at Dudley CCG Rebecca Bartholomew said: "We see this work as a top priority for us in Dudley to ensure we have no further tragic deaths of young people."

Children who have previously needed urgent attention because of their asthma will now be flagged up by doctors so they and their parents can be given more advice on how to control their condition.

A system is also being put in place whereby doctors can ensure children with asthma are not missing appointments.

The asthma in schools policy has been revised.

Jobs vow over The Public

TEACHING jobs will be created if The Public is turned into a sixth-form, college bosses vowed. The number of A-level and AS-level students would double if Sandwell College's sixth form took over the West Bromwich gallery, bosses said.

Engine steaming back



Black Country Living Museum demonstrator Ray Franklin from Colley Gate, and the replica Newcomen Engine at work

IT was full steam ahead for the historic engine at the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley when the refurbished machine was back in action.

The site's replica Newcomen Engine was up-and-running for the recent Bank Holiday weekend.

It is one of the first times the engine, a copy of the original created in the 18th century, has been in operation since the completion of a £100,000 restoration last year.

Engineers spent around 12 months painstakingly revamping the engine, which has been on display at the museum, in Tipton Road, since 1986. Restoration work

included replacing the wood head frame and adjusting worn parts of the pump and mine shaft.

Repairs were also carried out to the valve gear, piston and cylinders. All the hard work has paid off as visitors were able to see the engine in action over the past three days.

The engine was demonstrated by expert Ray Franklin, who was in period dress for the occasion.

Dudley Mayor Councillor Alan Finch, who paid an official visit to the museum, said the Newcomen Engine was always a popular draw for visitors. "There were a lot of people taking a look at the engine when it was in operation," he said.



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NEWS

Deal may be on horizon for £10m white elephant

PROPERTY experts are in 'active discussions' with an occupier to take over a £10 million fire control headquarters in the Black Country that was abandoned before ever opening.

Plans to open the site as a regional control centre for the fire service were scrapped before it was even finished and it has never had a tenant.

Taxpayers will have to pick up its £48 million rental bill over a 25-year lease if a tenant is never found while the public purse also continues to cover its round-the-clock security and electricity.

Total running costs including rent are around £1.8m a year but the site is now being offered to other businesses for just £450,000. The taxpayer will have to make up the shortfall if no new agreement can be reached.

The Government's Department for Communities and Local Government has brought in property consultants GVA to market the building and the company says it has found a potential occupier and hopes it can release good news in the coming months. It comes after senior civil servant Sir Bob Kerslake admitted the centre 'was not appropriate to the needs of the country', when it was created.

GVA used the £39,000 budget it was given by Whitehall to market the centre directly to a list of 2,500 prospective occupiers the firm agreed with the Government.

The company would however not reveal the identity, nor the sector, of the potential occupier for the site.

Bus engine catches fire

FIREFIGHTERS tackled a fire on a bus in Pensnett after the engine set alight. Crews from Brierley Hill were called to the blaze by The Fox and Grapes pub in High Street. The driver raised the alarm after seeing smoke coming out of the engine compartment of the single deck bus. There were no passengers on the bus.



The £10 million fire control headquarters at Wolverhampton Business Park has never opened after the project was abandoned

Parents adopting children will benefit from national scheme

ADOPTIVE parents in the Black Country are to benefit from a nationally-acclaimed support scheme.

The SafeBase Parenting Programme will be available to parents of adoptive children at any stage in the process.

It is part of a partnership between Adoption in the Black Country (ABC) and the charity After Adoption. SafeBase is said to have had a proven track record in other areas of the UK in preventing adoption

breakdown and encouraging adoption of hard-to-place children. The four Black Country councils' investment in the programme is financially supported by the Timpson Foundation.

Councillor Tim Crumpton, said: "I'm delighted adoptive families in the Black Country are to benefit from the highly-specialised support offered by SafeBase."

"It will complement the extensive support we already provide to our adoptive parents."

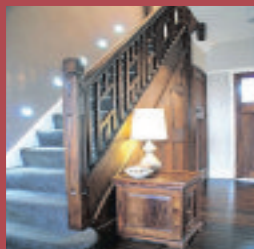
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Commercial Feature

Gambian folk are warm, welcoming and friendly

STAFF from Tenterfields School, Halesowen have just returned from their latest visit alongside other schools in Dudley, to Gambia where they have link schools just outside the capital Banjul.

The school has been linked with Gambia for about four years and several of the staff have been out to teach and work with student teachers at the Gambian College in Brikama. While there they were able to share ideas and viewpoints about the two diverse and rich cultures.

Headteacher Keith Butler, said: "Experiencing Gambia is a bit like being consumed by a giant colourful wave, stand still and the wave of colours will knock you over but dive forwards and you come out the other side invigorated by the Gambian people who are survivors, wasting nothing, constantly recycling and having the utmost respect for the few resources they have.

Cooking

"We watched as drinks cans were melted down in makeshift burners to make cooking utensils, pots and pans. We learned a lot from these proud, happy, industrious people. Everyone we met greeted us with a smile and a warm welcome, respect and friendship apparent everywhere we went.

"We are very proud to have links with two schools, Bijilo Nursery School, which caters for children aged three to seven and Bijilo Lower Basic School which has 2,000 children aged from seven to 14."

The football team at the lower basic school is now sporting their donated Villa kits and are looking forward to doing well in the new season.

"Our parents, children, friends and governors are sponsoring some of the children at the Nursery school as it survives on charitable donations.



From left Tenterfields teachers Dan Wade and Hannah Pickles, Head of Bijilo Nursery School Mr Baboucarr Jobe, deputy head of nursery school Mr Lamin Boye, Tenterfields head Keith Butler and learning support assistant Sharron Peacock



Bijilo Lower Basic school football team in their donated Aston Villa kits

"It is not funded by the Gambian Government. For a mere £12.50 per quarter, the sponsored child is clothed, fed and has their school and medical fees paid," said Mr Butler.

"This isn't a lot of money to us, but means the world to the families we are supporting, some of whom are surviving on a wage of only £3 per week."

Delicious

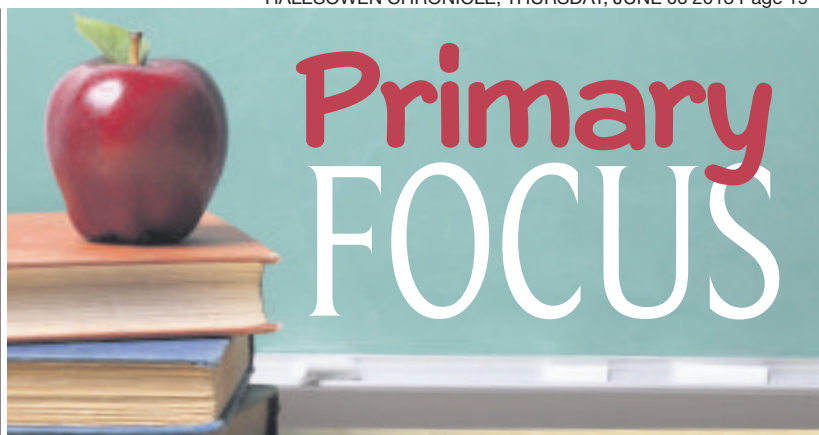
Highlights of the recent trip included an invitation to share a meal in our Gambian friends' compounds where we ate a delicious meal of benachin rice and locally caught fish including barracuda and the oddly toothsome butter fish.



The Benachin rice and fish dish which was shared among everyone

"We ate with our hands, balling the rice in our fists, joining in the meal the Gambian way. A sensational meal cooked to perfection on an open fire then we were off for a visit to the cultural forest at Makasutu and to another school out in the countryside which has been sponsored by Kitwell Primary School, Birmingham to enable them to build a library.

"We were able to work alongside Gambian teachers to share ideas and new ways of teaching. Teaching in a Gambian school has to be creative as resources are extremely sparse. We can't change the world but we can do our small part," added Mr Butler.



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CLUB NEWS

A dinner date with ex-mayor

DUDLEY SOUTH LADIES LUNCHEON CLUB

CHAIRMAN Mary Jones welcomed 42 members and one visitor for a three-course lunch and to hear speaker Councillor Michael Evans, former Mayor of Dudley.

Having taken a vow of service to Dudley he then became the number one citizen of the borough.

He travelled all over the West Midlands attending civic services, charity functions, entertained delegates from overseas and promoted businesses. He particularly enjoyed welcoming visitors to the Mayor's chambers and ended his term of office with the Mayor's Ball. Over the year £24,400 was raised for SSAFA and Leukaemia.

The chairman then surprised everyone with the news that Betty Griffin, who had been treasurer for 20 years, was retiring and moving to the south coast. Members expressed their gratitude for her devotion to the club and presented her with a bouquet. Sandra Chappell and Jan Burrows kindly agreed to take over as treasurer and registrar.

June's speaker will be John Sperry with a 'Reminder of the time'.

An outing to Stratford has been arranged for June 28 and Ann and Mike Rogers invited members to their home for a coffee morning on August 9.

Guild gets crafty for enjoyable afternoon



The art and craft section during an afternoon at the Craft Centre, Halfpenny Green

THE club's arts and craft section are seen here having a very busy afternoon at the Craft Centre at Halfpenny Green Vineyard.

They were having a very enjoyable and amusing time making a little gift bag to contain a tea bag and biscuit, which required the use several new skills including the use of glue.

A representative of Nova Chocolate talked at the guild meeting about chocolate, a very interesting subject. The excellent speaker related many unusual facts about chocolate

SEDGLEY TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD

including that it didn't necessarily make people fat, which was very pleasing.

At the next meeting Ruth Lowe will talk about Mary Quant in the 60 and 70s.

New members and visitors are always welcome to guild meetings which are on the third Monday at 7.15pm in Sedgley Community Centre.

Thought-provoking talk

BILSTON & DISTRICT SOROPTIMISTS

AT their Dinner Meeting, Members of SI Bilston were given a talk by Nanette Mellor, a campaign designer for Mencap.

It was the first after dinner speaker following the theme "A Day in the Life" for which president Tina has invited various women

speakers in different professions to share with members.

Nanette conveyed her thought-provoking memo-

ries of childhood and the lives of her mother and aunt, who had experienced sexual abuse when in care.

Her aunt had learning difficulties which made Nanette more determined to help protect vulnerable people or those with learning difficulties.

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*The "from" price and price bands vary for each show – see brochure for details.
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ENTERTAINMENT

Ghost is our world not the film's – star

The spectacular show is on at The Grand.
ALISON NORTON spoke with the stars of the musical

WHEN the film version of *Ghost* hit the big screen back in 1990, this romantic fantasy starring Demi Moore and Patrick Swayze made even the hardest hearted cinema goer shed a tear.

Who wouldn't be affected by a tale of true love ruined when the couple are torn apart by his untimely death?

As she leans over his body, you feel her despair and then his total frustration at being trapped between the real and spirit worlds, as he tries to avenge his own death and keep his love safe from harm.

Describes

The musical version of *Ghost* swept into the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre as part of the current UK tour. With music by one of the most respected musicians of recent times, Dave Stewart, and an Oscar winning screenplay by Bruce Joel Rubin adapted for stage, *Ghost* is not just a musical, it's an experience.

There's a Midlands flavour to the show too. Solihull born and bred, Stewart Clarke plays Sam Wheat. He describes the show as 'an awe-inspiring tale of the power of undying love'.

"To this day I have not seen the film," he said. "The world of *Ghost* that Rebecca (Trehearn) and I have created is our world and I would rather keep it that way."

Molly Jensen is played by Rebecca



Rebecca Trehearn and Stewart Clarke, who play the lead roles in *Ghosts*

Trehearn, who understudied the role in the West End.

Is it difficult to keep her emotions under control with such a heart-wrenching storyline?

"I do spend a lot of time crying and shouting on stage," laughed Rebecca, "and sometimes before a show I think, I don't want to cry anymore, but you just get swept along in it."

Wendy Mae Brown provides light relief as the loveable, but slightly crooked psychic, Oda Mae Brown, famously portrayed in the movie by the queen of American comedy, Whoopi Goldberg.

"As a black performer and with my name, I feel as if I was born to play her," laughed Wendy. Oda Mae is certainly a

colourful character, but it is Wendy's exceptional comedic timing and sparkling personality that lights up the stage.

The special effects in the show are phenomenal and the whole cast have the utmost respect for the technical team who create the magic.

Sam not only walks through doors, but appears in two places at once and ascends to heaven in the most spectacular way. It's just spine-tingling!

So do you believe in "Ghosts"? If not this show might just change your mind because you'll never feel or see anything like it.

Ghost runs until June 15. For tickets contact 01902 429212 or visit www.grandtheatre.co.uk

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What's On! Halesowen

REVIEW

Carnaby Street,
New Alexandra
Theatre, Birmingham

SET against the backdrop of London's West End in the 60s, its iconic clubs and fashion, Carnaby Street is the musical story of a generation.

Jam packed with more than 30 classic hits from the time, including In The Middle of Nowhere, I Only Wanna Be With You, Anyone Who Had a Heart, Keep on Running, and many, many more, it tells the story of a boy's dream to be a pop star – at any cost.

The musical tells of a young working class boy who arrives from Liverpool to London armed with nothing but his guitar, but in his pursuit of stardom he meets, falls in love and has his heart broken until he realises that fame is not all it is cracked up to be.

Energetic

The story was well told in songs although was slightly contrived and cheesy.

A news seller kept the New Alexandra Theatre audience up to date with important happenings of that era although a lot of what he said was lost as his parting shot was normally just as he was walking off stage.

The role of the would-be star Jude was played by Matthew Wycliffe with his love interest Jane (Tricia Adele-Turner). The two definitely has the strongest voices.

A very energetic, enthusiastic performance but somewhat lacking in vocal strength but very warmly received by the audience.

It runs until Saturday.

SUE ATTWATER

Triple spirit as Phantoms pack in songs from shows

THREE Phantoms from Andrew Lloyd Webber's famous musical perform in this event where musical theatre meets the Rat Pack.

It stars Earl Carpenter, Matt Cammelle and Stephen John Davis, who have all played the formidable Phantom to critical acclaim as well as principal roles in some of the greatest musicals.

It's Cooper play – just like that!

BEING Tommy Cooper is on a 39-date national tour stopping off at the New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham on June 12.

The new play, by Tom Green, stars Damian Williams as Tommy Cooper and celebrates the brilliance of Britain's famous comic and explores the pressures and loneliness of fame.

After Tommy's television debut in 1948, he went on to star in many variety shows in a career that spanned four decades.

Tommy died in 1984, famously collapsing from a heart attack on live television in front of millions of viewers during his act on Live From Her Majesty's.

The trio are joined at Birmingham's Symphony Hall on Wednesday, June 12 by Rebecca Caine who won the role of Christine Daaé as part of the original cast of The Phantom of the Opera.

This show filled with humour and heart-stirring performances features songs from West End musicals.

Hearts

Running at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre until Saturday, June 16, is the smash-hit musical Ghost, based on the Oscar-winning movie that captured the hearts and imaginations of a generation back in the 90s.

And for opera fans there is a feast from the Welsh National Opera at Birmingham Hippodrome with Wagner Dream (June 12); Lohengrin (June 13/15) and Madam Butterfly (June 14).

*Three Phantoms is in no way connected with and/or approved/endorsed by Really Useful Group or Andrew Lloyd Webber.



Marc Robinson as Buddy Holly



Rock'n'roll legend Jess Conrad

That'll be the day for nostalgia

HIT stage show Buddy Holly – a Legend Reborn is coming to Wolverhampton starring original rock'n'roll legend Jess Conrad.

Marc Robinson, a winner from ITV's legendary Stars in Their Eyes show, headlines the live production, bringing to life classic hits such as Peggy Sue, That'll be the Day and Oh Boy.

Heyday

Backed by a band reminiscent of the Crickets in their 50s heyday the show is an authentic slice of rock 'n' roll nostalgia.

Joining Marc are Jess Conrad, recreating the performances on 60s rock'n'roll show Oh Boy! and Patsy Lee, as Connie Francis with hits, Who's Sorry Now, Lipstick on Your Collar and Stupid Cupid.

The show is at the Grand Theatre on Sunday, June 16.

REVIEW

Maggie Boyle and Paul Downes, Newhampton Folk Club

THERE is an organic and unadorned feel to Maggie Boyle's style of singing and flute playing which is something a lot of folk musicians seemed to have left behind.

Teamed with guitarist Paul Downes they opened their set at the Newhampton Inn with a traditional-sounding duet Brave Boys with Paul using precise guitar picking to complement her voice.

Boyle doesn't have the strongest of voices but she uses it to good effect and her honest, almost nervy at times, tones are very refreshing.

She started Once in a While a Cappella, before moving on to her flute to fill out the rest of the tune.

Memories

Downes switched over to the five-string banjo for ballad Sweet Nancy before Boyle took over for a trio of flute solos which were a Lament for John Doherty, Betty Sue Southall and Paddy Boyle's Highland.

The first tune had a real sense of melancholia and brought memories of the soundtrack from the Ken Loach classic Kes. The second was more upbeat accompanied by Downes on guitar. The third even lighter with a definite Celtic sound.

Later on in the set Downes was back on the banjo showing his impressive picking skills, unfortunately his voice is nowhere near as good as his playing.

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What's On!

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SUNDAY'S TV 9.06.13

CHOICE



Iain Stewart

Rise of the Continents
BBC2, 9pm

The BBC likes its history documentaries, but this new series goes back a wee bit further than most... It sees Scottish geologist and broadcaster Professor Iain Stewart examine the very beginnings of the land masses we know today as our continents. In this opening edition, Iain takes a look at Africa, and how it was formed from the wreckage of a long-lost supercontinent. He examines all the evidence which scientists used to piece the facts together, including the landmarks, mineral wealth and wildlife, which all provide clues as to the continent's formation.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Sunday Politics. **12.15** Countryfile. (R) **1.10** Bargain Hunt. (R) **2.10** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.10** Points of View. **3.25** The People's Coronation with David Dimbleby. (R) **4.25** Songs of Praise. **5.00** Countryfile.

6.00 BBC News: Regional News; Weather. **6.15** Live Formula 1: Canadian Grand Prix. Suzi Perry introduces coverage of the seventh round of the season at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal (Start-time 7.00pm).

9.10 **D-Day: The Last Heroes.** Part one of two. Dan Snow examines how meticulous planning, espionage and 3D aerial photos helped the Allied forces gain a foothold in northern France during the Second World War. Concludes tomorrow at 9pm.

10.10 BBC News: Regional News; Weather.

10.35 **Have I Got Old News for You.** Another chance to see the satirical quiz. (R)

11.05 **Live at the Apollo.** Dara O Briain presents the comedy show from the Hammersmith Apollo, featuring performances by The Inbetweeners star Greg Davies and Canadian comedian Stewart Francis. (R)

11.35 **Film: Man of the Year.** (2006) A talk-show host is elected president, but faces a moral dilemma when he learns his victory was caused by a computer error. Comedy, with Robin Williams. **1.25** Weatherview. **1.30** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 This Is BBC Two. **7.00** Film: Christopher Strong. (1933) **8.15** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.45** The A to Z of TV Gardening. **9.30** The Beechgrove Garden. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.30** Chinese Food Made Easy. (R) **12.00** What to Eat Now. (R) **12.05** Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.35** EastEnders. (R) **2.25** Film: I Confess. (1953) **4.00** Boxing. **5.30** Flog It!

6.15 **Antiques Road Trip.** Kate Bliss and James Lewis set off on their Scottish road trip. (R)

7.00 **Peter Jones Meets.** The Dragons' Den star chats to Cobra Beer chairman and co-founder Karan Billimoria, and Charlie Mullins, who runs London-based firm Pimlico Plumbers.

8.00 **Operation Snow Tiger.** Part one of two. Scientists studying endangered Siberian tigers.

9.00 **Rise of the Continents.** New series. Geologist Professor Iain Stewart examines key moments in the development of the world's major land masses, beginning by focusing on the formation and history of Africa.

10.00 **Blackadder II.** Edmund embarks on a voyage around the Cape of Good Hope. (R) **10.30** **History of the Eagles.** Part two of two. The band's reunion in 1994.

11.40 **In Concert: The Eagles.** A 1973 performance by the band. (R)

12.10 **What a Load of Buzzcocks.** (R) **12.40** **Sign Zone: The People's Coronation** with David Dimbleby. (R) **1.40** Countryfile. (R) **2.35** Holby City. (R) **3.35** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Special Agent Oso. **6.10** Special Agent Oso. **6.25** The Hive. (R) **6.35** The Hive. (R) **6.40** Dino Dan. (R) **6.55** Dino Dan. (R) **7.05** Animals. (R) **7.15** Animals. (R) **7.20** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.30** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **8.00** Sonny with a Chance. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Country House Sunday. **9.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **10.20** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.20** ITV News. **11.30** Film: Columbo: By Dawn's Early Light. (1974) **1.30** Live French Open Tennis.

6.30 **Regional Programme:** Weather.

6.45 **ITV News:** Weather.

7.00 **Tipping Point: Lucky Stars.** New series. Chris Kamara, Rachel Riley and Stacey Solomon feature in a celebrity edition of the quiz, in which contestants answer questions to win turns on an arcade-style machine.

8.00 **Agatha Christie's Poirot.** New series. An elderly psychiatrist is murdered.

10.00 **ITV News:** Weather.

10.15 **French Open Tennis.** Highlights of the men's singles final from Roland Garros.

11.45 **The Unforgettable Russell Hardy.** Profile of the chat-show host, who became a household name in the 1970s and 80s for his staging of some revealing celebrity interviews as Michael Parkinson's main rival. (R)

12.15 **The Store.** **2.15** Monk. (R) **3.00** Motorsport UK. Highlights from Donington Park, featuring the Formula Ford Championship and Porsche Carrera Cup. **3.50** ITV News. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.00 The Treacle People. (R) **6.10** Blancpain Endurance Series. **7.05** Will & Grace. (R) **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.00** The Simpsons. (R) **1.30** The Simpsons. (R) **2.00** Film: The Brady Bunch Movie. (1995) **3.45** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.50** Deal or No Deal. **5.50** Channel 4 News.

6.15 **The Political Slot.** Seema Malhotra, Labour MP for Feltham and Heston, talks about the benefits of work-experience opportunities for teenagers.

6.20 **Film: Ice Age: The Meltdown.** (2006) Three prehistoric animals search for a tree to use as a boat and escape the danger of a melting glacier. Animated adventure sequel, with the voices of Ray Romano and Denis Leary.

8.00 **Terror in the Skies.** New series. Aeronautical engineer Brendan Walker presents shocking footage of aviation incidents and near misses, and tells stories of survival and bravery in the sky.

9.00 **The Returned.** New series. French supernatural thriller set in a small Alpine village where a group of men, women and children do not yet know they have been dead for several years.

10.10 **Film: Law Abiding Citizen.** (2009) Thriller, starring Gerard Butler and Jamie Foxx.

12.10 **Film: Funny Games.** (2008) **2.15** St Elsewhere. (R) **3.00** Deal or No Deal. (R) **3.55** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.50** Countdown. (R) **5.35** Baking Mad with Eric Lanlard. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Fifi and the Flowertots. (R) **6.25** Bubble Guppies. **6.40** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.50** Chloe's Closet. **7.00** Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.10** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **7.25** Noddy in Toyland. (R) **7.35** City of Friends. (R) **7.55** Little Princess. (R) **8.05** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.20** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **8.35** Hana's Helpline. (R) **8.45** Rupert Bear. (R) **9.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.15** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **9.30** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **9.45** Jelly Jamm. (R) **10.00** Power Rangers: Super Samurai. (R) **10.35** ThunderCats. (R) **11.00** Inside Hollywood. **11.05** Eddie Stobart: Trucks and Trailers. (R) **12.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.10** Film: Police Academy 3: Back in Training. (1986) **2.50** Film: Cop and a Half. (1993) **4.35** Film: Dr Doolittle 2. (2001)

6.15 **Film: Fairytale: A True Story.** (1997) Fact-based drama, with Florence Hoath and Elizabeth Earl.

8.00 **Once Upon a Time.** Regina is suspected of murdering Archie.

8.55 **5 News Weekend.**

9.00 **Film: The Next Three Days.** (2010) Premiere. Drama, starring Russell Crowe and Elizabeth Banks.

11.40 **Film: 3:10 to Yuma.** (2007) Western remake, starring Russell Crowe.

1.55 SuperCasino. **4.00** Michaela's Wild Challenge. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **4.50** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.00** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **5.15** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.25** The Funky Valley Show. (R) **5.35** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.50** Hana's Helpline. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Snog, Marry, Avoid? **7.30** Great Movie Mistakes **7.40** Film: Madagascar (2005) **9.00** Bollywood Carmen Live **10.00** Family Guy **10.45** American Dad! **11.30** Russell Howard's Good News Extra

BBC Four
7.00 Dark Ages: An Age of Light **8.00** Aristotle's Lagoon **9.00** Britain Through a Lens: The Documentary Film Mob **10.00** Film: The Kid with a Bike (2011) **11.20** Bobby Womack: Across 110th Street

ITV2
1.45 Britain's Got Talent: The Live Final **4.20** Britain's Got Talent: The Live Final **5.05** Film: Robots (2005) **7.10** Film: Johnny English (2003) **9.00** Britain's Got More Talent Best & Worst: LOL Moments **10.00** The Only Way Is Essex **10.50** Big Rich Texas **11.50** Piers Morgan's Life Stories: Jason Donovan

ITV3
2.00 Lewis **4.00** Housewife, 49 **6.00** Agatha Christie's Marple **8.00** All the Queen's Men with Alan Titchmarsh **9.00** Film: The Pianist (2002)

ITV4
11.30 Live British Touring Car Championship **6.00** French Open Tennis **8.00** Mindy **9.00** Joey: The Man Who Conquered the TT **10.30** Film: Nighthawks (1981)

E4
4.30 Revenge **5.30** Mindy Project **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **7.30** New Girl **8.00** Film: The Wedding Planner (2001) **10.00** Inbetweeners **11.00** Alan Carr: Chatty Man **Film4**
3.15 City of Ember (2008) **5.05** Addams Family Values (1993) **6.50** The Jewel of the Nile (1985) **9.00** Appaloosa (2008) **11.15** Changing Lanes (2002)

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What's On!

Film Choices

MONDAY

Don't Worry About Me, BBC1, 10.15pm
Londoner David finds himself stranded in Liverpool after a night out and decides to head to the dog track to try to turn his pocket change into enough cash to buy a train ticket home. After following the tips of kindly stranger Tina, he achieves a big win and, to kill the hours before his train leaves, persuades her to show him around the city. Romantic drama directed by David Mamet, starring James Brought. (2009)

TUESDAY

Jenny Girl, BBC1, 10.35pm
A heartbroken husband struggles to raise his baby daughter alone after the death of his beloved wife in childbirth. The pressure becomes too much and he loses his job, forcing him to leave New York and move in with his dad in New Jersey – but it is here where a new romance brings the promise of happiness back into his life. Kevin Smith's romantic comedy drama, with Ben Affleck, Liv Tyler and Jennifer Lopez. (2004)

WEDNESDAY

The Last Shot, BBC1, 11.55pm
An FBI agent shoots up a scheme to capture an infamous Mafia boss. As part of the sting, he has to pose as a Hollywood producer – and even ends up agreeing to bankroll an aspiring director's film. However, the stuntwork cap ends up putting the police operation on the back burner as he falls for the glamour of Tinseltown. Crime comedy, starring Matthew Broderick, Alec Baldwin, Tony Shalhoub and Lori Loughlin. (2004)



Inland Empire, Friday, ITV, 10.35pm

THURSDAY

King Solomon's Mines, Channel 4, 1.35pm
A soldier of fortune agrees to help a woman look for her husband, who went missing while searching for long-lost diamond mines in Africa. Together they journey into the uncharted heart of the vast continent, encountering danger along the way – and finding romance. Adventure based on H Rider Haggard's novel, with Stewart Granger, Deborah Kerr, Richard Crenna, Hugo Weaving, Lowell Gilmore, Sirkka, Kinnear, Sekizonyo, Sledge, Munro Armijo, Isagwenta and John Barnes. (1985)

FRIDAY

Inland Empire, ITV, 10.35pm
A Hollywood actress is given a coveted role in a movie based on a Polish folk tale. However, not only does she discover a previous attempt to film this story had ended in two murders, but also finds her gap on reality starting to slip as the line between fact and fiction begins to blur. David Lynch's mystery drama, starring Laura Dern, Jeremy Irons, Justin Theroux, Harry Dean Stanton, Diane Ladd, William H Macy, Julie Orrind and Naomi Watts. (2006)

Pick of the Week

Jenny hopes to make a good impression

A part from an appointment with a doctor for 'personal problems', the first date is pretty much as awkward as it gets. The nervous wait in the bar, the first impression, the nagging feeling that this date will end in disaster, humiliation or rejection.

Whatever your thoughts on the subject, it's a universal truth that first dates are rarely plain sailing. While some are notable only as the source of hilarious stories, they are always one thing – memorable.

This comedy-defining ritual seems a perfect fit for TV, a point finally taken on-board by Channel 4, who have enlisted Bryan Elsley, the director behind 24's Skins, and an ensemble of fine actors to bring the cringe-inducing subject to life.

Part of the channel's Making Season, the nine-part drama Dates takes a step into the social minefield – a place where confessions, lies, crises of confidence and sexual confusion come together with dramatic and hilarious effect. The key ingredient in the project is the acting

talent, which includes Andrew Scott, who played Moriarty in BBC's Sherlock, Neil Maskell, who played a cold, measured killer in Channel 4's Utopia and Sheridan Smith, who is in pretty much everything.

"Being of awkward moments, Smith, who first made her presence known as Antony's girlfriend in The Royle Family over ten years ago, remembers one disastrous first date involving a dancer who'd had one red cocktail too many. "He took me to the bus stop, and we got on the night bus, and there were no seats, so we were stood up, and as we were waiting about holding on to the bar, I could see him turning slightly green. And before I knew it, I had red sick all down my dress."

It's the stuff of nightmares, and the kind of story we've heard countless times from friends, but when it comes to her character Jenny, a lonely school teacher, dates also have very nice side-effects. "The first one is with Neil Maskell, which I heard an amusing actor... when I heard he was in it, I was thrilled. And he was so lovely. Not like his character, but it

that way! And then in my other episode, it was with Andrew Scott, who's a friend of mine who I've worked with before. There's a lot of laughter in that episode, and that's goodness, because we literally could not stop laughing."

A mixed bag, then, which sums up her choice of roles in recent years. From comedic outings in Benidorm and Gavin and Stacey to serious roles like that of Channin Biggs, wife of train robber Pearce, in the ITV drama Mrs Biggs – for which she won a Bafta – it seems she succeeds in everything she does. A point proven by the fact that Dustin Hoffman gave her a role in his film Quarter after being moved to tears by her performance on stage in Flare Path.

Roses and words aside, Smith is clear on how her perfect first date should go. "It's awkward, so my ideal date would probably be something involving going to see animals. And it's always nice to be swept off your feet a little bit. But my big thing is, make me laugh."



Sheridan Smith stars in Dates, Tuesday, Channel 4, 10pm

Best of the Rest

MONDAY

EastEnders

BBC1, 8pm

A lot has changed since Peter was last in Walford – his stepson Jane has left, his twin sister has a new baby, and his childhood sweetheart Lauren Branning is now an alcoholic. But the development that's puzzling him the most is why Lucy is now running the cafe instead of Ian. His dad is forced to explain about his breakdown, but also implies that Lucy took advantage of his vulnerable state to launch a hostile takeover of the Beale empire. Naturally, Lucy is keen to defend herself, but instead of trying to get the prodigal Beale back on side, perhaps she'd be better off asking him what he's been up to for the last three years, and just why he's suddenly returned...

The Gadget Show

Channel 5, 8pm

This week's show features Rachel Riley's report on the revolution in TV tech, buffering for her art again. Polyanna Woodhead has jetted off to California to test a submarine and a water-propelled stunt bike, while Jon Bentley gives us a demo of convertible laptops for the new Windows 8 operating system. He's assisted by Jonathan Slinger, Paralympic rower James Rose, artist Kyle Lambert and Britain's fastest touch-typeist Bethan Davis. And if that's not enough to pique your interest, there's also Two Door Cinema Club passing judgement on assorted music-streaming sites. In fact the only thing missing is the marvellous Suzi Perry. Let's hope producers finally see sense and let her back into the fold.

TUESDAY

Gibraltar: Britains in the Sun

Channel 5, 8pm

Sitting in the mouth of the Mediterranean, the British Overseas Territory of Gibraltar has long held a far greater significance than its size would otherwise suggest. But what's life like for the people living on the two and a half-square-mile rock? This enjoyable documentary aims to find out, by following some of the 30,000 sailors, seapets and tourists who make their home among the slopes, suburbs and Barbary snappers of the island. They include Dr Eric Shaw, who is in charge of looking after the monkeys, and police officer Dylan Guigay, who has a few complications with an arrest.

WEDNESDAY

All Star Mr & Mrs

ITV, 8pm

One of the delights of tuning into the show is finding out which selection of guests will be appearing – the juxtaposition of some of them is, at times, rather weird and wonderful. That's definitely the case this week, when Ricky Tomlinson, who's still best known for his role as Jim in The Benny Family, and his wife Rita feature alongside runner Paula Radcliffe and her husband, coach Gary Lough. Also appearing will be Shelly Corne, Dancing professionals Ole and James Jordan, seeing as they both work and live together, they must know each other rather well, or so you would think.

The Iraq War

BBC2, 9pm

The first two programmes in this fascinating series have looked back the conflict, but the final edition brings the story right up to date. Former foreign secretary Jack Straw reveals how he and US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice made Iraq's Prime Minister Ibrahim Jassaf stop down, but the problems of finding somebody to replace him then reared its ugly head. Stephen Hadley, US National Security Advisor, explains that it was delegates from his country who suggested Nouri al-Maliki was an excellent choice – and sure enough, he took office in 2006. But it's the report on the levels of violence still prevalent in Iraq that send the most shivers down the spine.

THURSDAY

Big Brother: Secrets & Lies Live Launch Part 1

Channel 5, 8pm

Emma Willis has taken over as presenter of the returning reality show, which is hardly surprising considering she did such a good show of fronting the sister show, Big Brother's Bit on the Side. The fly-on-the-wall reality show is new on its 14th season, and the scary thing is many teenagers have never known a time without the Diary.

Room, Marcus Bentley's mansion or the assorted wannabe celebs who started off as Guinea pigs and wound up using the show as a launch pad to kick start their own showbiz career. This time the Omelians should have had an eco-style makeover in line with this year's self-sufficiency theme.

FRIDAY

Harbour Lines

ITV, 8pm

Usually, when Ben Fogle turns up on our screens, it's because he's hiking up a mountain, rowing across the Atlantic or roughing it in a yurt in Alaska. So this new series, which finds him exploring Dorset, should feel like a real holiday – especially as he begins his journey in Sandbanks. As you'd expect, properties with such an exclusive address come with a hefty price tag attached, and estate agent Adrian Dartford reveals his company sold £50million-worth of bricks and mortar there last year alone. To see exactly what £50million will get you in Sandbanks, Ben takes a tour of one of the properties currently up for sale.

Big Brother's Bit on the Side

Channel 5, 10.30pm

If you fancy a successful career in showbusiness, you could do worse than front a Big Brother spin-off show. After all, Dermot O'Leary, Russell Brand and Emma Willis have all earned their stripes reporting on latest developments in the Big Brother house. Borrowing from one reality show to the next is X Factor reject and Celebrity Big Brother winner Rylan Clark, who will be adding his pearls of wisdom to the proceedings.

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Anniversary Games

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1. But she's unlikely to rush into marriage! (6,4)
2. It's charitable to give its benefit (5)
3. Some simple answer as an excuse (4)
4. Value fools to a point (6)
5. A note of whimsy? (8)
6. Grave words (7)
11. Support for a player (5,5)
13. Stopped sorting out re-treads (8)
14. A prize for waste! (7)
16. It helps to keep a roof over one's head (6)
17. The directors don't sound very keen (5)
20. Failed - for want of direction? (4)



8	1	2	5	3	9	6	7
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LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
 CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Scratched; 8 Ego; 9 Well-
 ended; 11 I have to; 12 Guider; 13 Scions; 15
 Freight; 17 Might; 18 In spirit; 20 Opera singing;
 22 Eel; 23 Sceptical. Down: 2 Cue; 3 There; 4
 Hudson; 5 Dowager; 6 Wedding ring; 7 Hottentot;
 10 Leading role; 11 Hush money; 14 Nutmegs;
 16 Pirate; 19 Point; 21 Era. QUICK - Across:
 1 Quintuple; 8 One; 9 Declaration; 11 Tangles;
 12 Their; 13 Avenue; 15 Lesson; 17 Satan; 18
 Absence; 20 Arrangement; 22 Rot; 23 Literally.
 Down: 2 Use; 3 Trail; 4 Praise; 5 Epistle; 6
 Convenience; 7 Deference; 10 Concentrate; 11
 Transport; 14 General; 16 Magnet; 19 Steer;
 21 Nil.



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Two-bed flat with no upward chain

A MODERN first floor leasehold flat with two spacious bedrooms in an attractive small development of high quality apartments is for sale with no upward chain priced at £149,950.

The property is in Regency Court, Dibdale Road, West, Dudley, which is close to Milking Bank housing estate, and is set within landscaped communal grounds with electric security gates entrance and allocated car parking space.

There is a dining kitchen with the dining area 17ft 4in by 13ft 6in and the kitchen 12ft 2in by 11ft 1in and fitted with a range of base, drawer and wall units, work surfaces, integrated fridge, freezer and dishwasher and double oven and hob with cooker hood over.

Cubicle
There is also a lounge, 15ft 4in by 14ft 3in, with a marble fireplace with electric fire.

Bedroom one has an en suite with shower cubicle, pedestal wash hand basin and WC, and there is a second bedroom and a bathroom with white suite of panelled bath, shower, wash hand basin in vanity unit and WC.

Call Wakeman on 01384 459999 for more details.



Number 5 Regency Court, Dibdale Road West, Dudley, is on sale with Wakeman



The kitchen area is light and modern. It has a breakfast bar for dining

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Brierley Hill



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* Semi Detached House * Two Bedrooms * Extended Kitchen * Utility * EPC = D
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Halesowen



Clifton Road
* Two Bedrooms * Good Sized Living Room * Rear Garden * Off Road Parking * No Upward Chain * EPC = C
Offers in the region of £104,950

Cradley Heath



Station Road
* Three bedrooms * Two reception rooms * Pleasant rear garden * Gas boiler serving radiators * Bathroom with shower * Double glazing as detailed * EPC = E
Offers in the region of £94,950

Cradley Heath



Codsall Road
* Mid terrace house * Recently modernised & replanned * Three bedrooms * Bathroom * Living Room * Refitted kitchen/dining * Forecourt parking * Garden * EPC = C
Offers in the region of £92,500

Rowley Regis



4 Heath Street
* modern semi-detached house * 3 bedrooms * double glazed windows * gas boiler/radiator heating system * bathroom with shower over bath * carpets/floor coverings EPC=C
Monthly rent of £585+ application fee
£135 (inc VAT) 1st tenant and £65 (inc VAT) each additional tenant. Deposit required 6 weeks rent.

Cradley Heath



10 Bramble Close
* Ideal house for young family or couple * 2 Bedrooms * Contemporary decoration * Modern bathroom suite * DG windows, GCH & alarm * Parking for 3 vehicles * EPC = C
Monthly rent of £550+ application fee
£135 (inc VAT) 1st tenant and £65 (inc VAT) each additional tenant. Deposit required 6 weeks rent.

Halesowen



29 Windmill Hill
* Modern house with garden * 2 double bedrooms * Master bed with walk-in wardrobe * Ensuite bathroom & house shower room * Kitchen with various appliances * Down stairs W.C & alarm * DG windows & Gas CH* EPC = C
Monthly rent of £525+ application fee
£135 (inc VAT) 1st tenant and £65 (inc VAT) each additional tenant. Deposit required 6 weeks rent.

Dudley



Flat 5 Festival Court
* St. Johns Street * Ground floor flat * Two bedrooms * EPC = C * Kitchen with essential appliances * Spacious living room * Bathroom with shower * Secure gated car park
Monthly rent of £420+ application fee
£135 (inc VAT) 1st tenant and £65 (inc VAT) each additional tenant. Deposit required 6 weeks rent.

Halesowen



2 Netherend Lane
* Ground floor flat with GARAGE * Spacious double bedroom * Kitchen with cooker * Living room with electric fire * Neutral decor, DGV & NS/H * Available NOW! * EPC = D
Monthly rent of £395+ application fee
£135 (inc VAT) 1st tenant and £65 (inc VAT) each additional tenant. Deposit required 6 weeks rent.

Cradley Heath



1 Chartwell Grange
441 Halesowen Road
* Ground floor flat * EPC = F * One bedroom * Large living room * Kitchen with walk-in store * Bathroom with shower * Communal gardens & car parking * Ideal for public transport
Monthly rent of £395+ application fee
£135 (inc VAT) 1st tenant and £65 (inc VAT) each additional tenant. Deposit required 6 weeks rent.

Halesowen



72 Stourbridge Road
* Ground floor flat * One bedroom * Shower room * Electric heating * Car space * Close to Halesowen Town Centre * EPC = E
Monthly rent of £390+ application fee
£135 (inc VAT) 1st tenant and £65 (inc VAT) each additional tenant. Deposit required 6 weeks rent.

Tipton



15 Old Port Close
* First Floor Flat * NEWLY REFURBISHED * EPC = C * One Bedroom * Open plan kitchen/living room * Night storage heating * Car space
Monthly rent of £389+ application fee
£135 (inc VAT) 1st tenant and £65 (inc VAT) each additional tenant. Deposit required 6 weeks rent.

Oldbury



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Halesowen



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£875 PCM



HALESOWEN, CHERRY ORCHARD CRESCENT

Located close to central Halesowen and close to shops and transport links, this large unfurnished semi detached house features 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, downstairs WC, 4 bedrooms, large bathroom with separate shower, garage and driveway parking, gardens, lovely views from bedroom 2. EPC: D

£775 PCM



HALESOWEN, WOBURN DRIVE

An unfurnished semi detached house on a popular estate, briefly comprising: gas central heating, lounge, dining room, fitted kitchen, 3 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, front & rear garden, driveway parking and garage. EPC: E

£595 PCM



STOURBRIDGE, WHEELER STREET

A traditional 3 bedroom mid terrace property in the highly sought after Old Quarter of Stourbridge. Featuring front reception room with original marble fireplace, rear reception room, fitted kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, 2 large double bedrooms and 1 large single. Lovely rear garden, gas central heating, double glazing. On road parking. Available 2006/13. EPC: D

£595 PCM



HALESOWEN, TREGARRON ROAD

Ideally situated for local shops and buses to Halesowen, Stourbridge and Cradley Heath. A well presented semi-detached house featuring a large lounge, modern kitchen, 3 good sized bedrooms, house bathroom with shower, new double glazing, gas central heating, driveway and garage parking, front and rear gardens. EPC: D

£575 PCM



HALESOWEN, FATHERLESS BARN CRESCENT

Excellent value for money. An exceptionally spacious home in a very popular location close to local shops and bus routes to Merry Hill, Halesowen and Stourbridge. Close to Colley Lane Primary School featuring 3 double bedrooms, through lounge, modern fitted kitchen, house bathroom with shower, double glazing, gas central heating, rear garden with great views. EPC: C

£575 PCM



HALESOWEN, ELM TREE GROVE

A 3 bedroom semi-detached dormer bungalow in a quiet residential area and close to colley lane primary school, comprising: 3 double bedrooms (1 downstairs), living room, fitted kitchen, gas central heating, double glazed, new carpets throughout, small private garden, garage and driveway. EPC: F

£550



HALESOWEN, BEAUMONT ROAD

Superb fully re-furnished traditional semi-detached house. 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, 2 double bedrooms, gas central heating, double glazed. A must see property! EPC: E

£550 PCM



HALESOWEN, CAVALIER DRIVE

This beautifully presented and well looked after furnished first floor apartment is centrally located to Halesowen, within easy reach of the town centre and local bus station featuring 2 bedrooms, large lounge with access to your own balcony, fitted kitchen, bathroom with shower, electric heating, double glazing, allocated parking space for one car. A must see property. EPC: C

£550 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, TIMBERTREE CRESCENT

Located within easy reach of Timbertree School. This semi detached house has been fully refurbished to a high standard and features 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen diner, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower, front and rear gardens, rear garden having outbuildings. On road parking. Available now. EPC: C

£525 PCM



HALESOWEN, ADAMS COURT

Conveniently located for local shops and buses to Halesowen and Stourbridge. A large and spacious ground floor apartment featuring modern decor and fixtures and benefiting from gas central heating, spacious living room, fitted kitchen with white goods, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with separate shower cubicle and allocated parking space. EPC: C

£525 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, COURT STREET

A 2 bedroom traditional terrace property in the centre of Old Hill which features 2 double bedrooms, 2 reception rooms, 1 dining/study room, modern fitted kitchen and downstairs bathroom with shower and separate toilet. Gas central heating. Walking distance to rail/bus links. EPC: E

£495 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, CLIFTON STREET

Unfurnished modern mid terrace house with gas central heating, living room, fitted dining kitchen, 2 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, rear garden, 2 allocated parking spaces. EPC: TBC

£495 PCM



HALESOWEN, ROUNDHILL TERRACE

Located in the popular area of Hurst Green. A lovely unfurnished mid terrace house which features a modern fitted dining kitchen, 2 good size bedrooms, modern lounge, gas central heating, double glazing, on road parking, large rear garden. EPC: E

£495 PCM



STOURBRIDGE, BAGLEY STREET

Deceptively large and within walking distance to Stourbridge town centre. This lovely semi-detached house features a great lounge, large dining kitchen with gas oven and hob, 2 double bedrooms, house bathroom with shower, nice sized rear garden, on road parking, double glazing, gas central heating. Available now. EPC: D

£485 PCM



HALESOWEN, THE INFELD

Stunning and modern apartment on a sought after new estate. This ground floor apartment features 2 bedrooms, large lounge with superb kitchen and appliances, bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing, allocated parking. Available immediately. Not to be missed! EPC: C

£475 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, PEAR TREE LANE

Modern 1st floor apartment. Situated on a popular development within walking distance of Old Hill train station and Old Hill shops, the property comprises: 1 large double bedroom and 1 single bedroom, gas central heating, spacious living room, fitted kitchen with small fridge, bathroom with shower, parking space, own rear garden, unfurnished. EPC: B

£475 PCM



STOURBRIDGE, HALL STREET

Located in the sought after area of Oldswinford. A quaint mid-terrace house, close to local shops and transport links featuring 2 double bedrooms, fitted kitchen, downstairs shower room, cosy front lounge, rear sitting room, large rear garden, double glazing, gas central heating, on road parking. EPC: E

£475 PCM



HALESOWEN, HIGHFIELD ROAD

Deceptively large semi-detached house, close to local shops and buses to Halesowen, Stourbridge and Cradley Heath featuring 2 good sized lounges, fitted kitchen, downstairs bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing, allocated parking, on road parking. Available mid June 2013. EPC: TBC

£475 PCM



TIPTON, PEARTREE AVENUE

Cul-de-sac location. This deceptively large 3 bedroom terrace house has undergone a redecoration. It features a spacious lounge, large modern fitted kitchen, house bathroom with shower, nice sized garden, driveway parking and is in a quiet cul-de-sac location. EPC: C

£475 PCM



CRADLEY HEATH, ELBOW STREET

Situated in a quiet location, within walking distance to Old Hill town and local train station this unfurnished first floor flat comprises: Electric storage heating, large living room, fitted kitchen, one double bedroom, bathroom with shower, communal gardens, allocated parking. EPC: C

£450 PCM

Property

Versatile home with up to four bedrooms



This three-storey home in Attingham Drive, Dudley is on the market via estate agents Swinscoes

A THREE-STOREY town house in a quiet cul-de-sac in Attingham Drive, Dudley, is for sale for offers around £169,950.

Within walking distance of local amenities, schools and transport links, the property has on the ground floor an entrance hallway, bedroom three with en suite, bedroom four/dining room and utility room.

On the first floor are a dining kitchen and lounge and on the second a master bedroom with en suite and bedroom two with en suite, with the

home also benefitting from gas central heating, uPVC double glazing, low maintenance rear garden and parking for two to three cars.

On the ground floor bedroom three is 11ft by 9ft 6in with an en suite of WC, pedestal wash hand basin and double shower cubicle with bedroom four/dining room having french doors to the rear garden.

There is also a utility room with units, work surface and plumbing for appliances.

On the first floor the lounge, 16ft 2in by 17ft 1in, has French doors to a Juliet balcony and feature fireplace while the dining kitchen – 16ft 2in by 11ft 1in –

has a range of wall and floor units, work surfaces, stainless steel one-and-a-half bowl sink drainer, integrated oven and gas hob with extractor over, space for fridge/freezer and plumbing for dishwasher.

On the second floor are two bedrooms, both en suite bedroom one with WC, pedestal wash hand basin, bath and separate shower cubicle and bedroom two with WC, pedestal wash hand basin and shower cubicle.

Outside the rear garden is set over two tiers with patio and lawns.

Call estate agent Swinscoes on 01902 672274 for more details.



The first floor lounge includes a feature fireplace



The dining room or a bedroom – the choice could be yours

Extended semi on the market



Double gates on the driveway lead to the garage of the semi in Coseley

AN extended semi within easy reach of Sedgley, Coseley, Wolverhampton and Dudley is for sale priced at £119,950.

The property in Hurst Road, Coseley, has gas central heating and double glazing, a wet room on the ground floor with shower, WC and pedestal wash hand basin.

The kitchen has a stainless steel single drainer inset sink, base, drawer and wall units, work surfaces, electric cooker point, gas point and plumbing for washing machine while the lounge – 15ft 5in by 14ft 11in – has a feature brick fire surround and the dining/sun lounge is 14ft by 5ft 4in.

On the first floor are three bedrooms and a bathroom.

Outside is a garage, with the house approached via a driveway and parking area with gardens to the front and rear including shrubs, borders and fish pond.

Call Wakeman on 01902 885894.



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EPC D

£146,950

Semi detached property situated in a popular cul-de-sac location. Includes lounge, second reception room, three bedrooms, garage and rear garden.

Powke Lane, Rowley Regis



EPC C

Offers Over £140,000

This modern terraced house comprises lounge/diner, kitchen two bedrooms and family bathroom.

Unitt Drive, Cradley Heath



EPC C

Offers Over £140,000

A modern property with accommodation comprising lounge/diner, kitchen, WC, three bedrooms, family bathroom, drive, garage and rear garden.

Slater Close, Cradley Heath



EPC C

£139,995

Modern detached house comprising WC, lounge, kitchen/diner, conservatory, three bedrooms, en-suite to master bedroom and family bathroom.

Hillside Avenue, Rowley Regis



EPC D

Offers Over £110,000

This is a traditional three bedroom semi detached house situated in a cul-de-sac. The accommodation benefits from front and rear gardens.

Yew Tree Lane, Rowley Regis



EPC D

Offers Over £110,000

This traditional semi detached house has accommodation comprising lounge, kitchen, utility, WC, three bedrooms, bathroom and driveway.

Mill Road, Cradley Heath



EPC D

£90,000

A semi detached house comprising lounge, kitchen, three bedrooms, bathroom, front and rear gardens.

New Pool Road, Cradley Heath



EPC D

£85,000

An end terraced property comprising porch, WC, lounge, kitchen/diner, three bedrooms, family bathroom, rear garden and driveway.

St. Marks Road, Dudley



Awaiting EPC

Offers Over £120,000

Semi detached three bedroom property briefly comprising entrance hall, lounge, kitchen/diner, family bathroom, rear garden and driveway.

Red Lion Close, Tividale



EPC D

Offers Over £120,000

Three bedroom semi detached property comprising, entrance hall, lounge, dining area, conservatory, kitchen, shower room, front and rear gardens.

Colsyll Gardens, Dudley



Awaiting EPC

Offers Over £120,000

Semi detached three bedroom property comprising entrance hall, lounge, kitchen/diner, downstairs WC, family bathroom, rear garden and driveway.

Crockett Street, Dudley



EPC D

Offers Over £120,000

A well presented three bedroom property briefly comprising entrance porch, lounge/diner, kitchen, family bathroom, garage, front and rear gardens.

Maple Road, Dudley



EPC C

Offers Over £110,000

Semi detached three bedroom property comprising lounge, kitchen/diner, conservatory, rear garden and garage.

Greaves Road, Dudley



EPC C

Offers Over £90,000

Mid terraced three bedroom property briefly comprising lounge, kitchen/diner, downstairs bathroom, front and rear gardens.

Poplar Green, Dudley



EPC E

Offers Over £90,000

Semi detached three bedroom property briefly comprising lounge, kitchen/diner, WC, family bathroom, front and rear gardens and driveway.

Daffodil Close, Dudley



Awaiting EPC

Offers Over £60,000

This 50% shared ownership property is a semi detached two bedroom residence. Briefly comprising lounge, kitchen/diner, front and rear gardens.

Motoring

Compiled by Motoring
Editor Sharon Walters

Lunar's camper car is a new concept

LUNAR has announced its return to the motorhome market by launching a whole new vehicle concept.

The all-new and exciting Lunar Vacanza camper car is the first of its kind on the UK market and combines the dual benefits of a roomy, four-person camper with an efficient, easy to manoeuvre, everyday family car – the ideal solution for those who want the best of both.

No larger than most family cars – at 4.4m long and 2.01m wide (with mirrors) – the new Lunar Vacanza has a similar footprint to a VW Beetle and can be easily garaged.

Built to the high standards of quality, luxury and safety one would expect from Lunar, the Vacanza has European Whole Vehicle Type Approval, has been fully crash tested, includes four belted seats and offers luxuries such as a reversing camera and air conditioning, making it a pleasure to drive.

Family

Based on the award-winning Nissan NV200 Combi, the Vacanza offers a host of features that will appeal similarly to both a young family and the seasoned camper van enthusiast. With class leading 135g/km CO2 emissions and 50-plus MPG, the Vacanza is one of the most economical and environmentally-friendly vehicles in the marketplace and road tax is just £120 a year.

The Vacanza offers supreme versatility. In the city, it's easy to park and provides plenty of room for shopping. Drive it to the countryside



The Lunar Vacanza camper car is the first of its kind on the UK market

and the Vacanza affords comfortable living space suitable for a family thanks to the exclusive rotating front seats and well equipped kitchen with grill, fridge and three-burner hob.

To ensure a comfortable night's sleep for both adults and children, there is also an innovative, easy to store, double bed system plus fold-out beds inside the roof.

A bespoke tailgate awning will shortly be

available that allows the Vacanza to dock at a site. This means that kit can be unloaded at the pitch, and frees up the Vacanza for everyday travel to and from the site.

Brian Mellor, chairman and CEO of Lunar, said: "It has been four years since we last launched a new model into the motorhome market and we are very excited to be returning with our brand new Vacanza camper car – a



The environmentally-friendly Vacanza is based on the Nissan NV200 Combi

concept designed in response to the growing trend and a move towards more economical and smaller leisure vehicles.

"The Vacanza is not just a new vehicle; it is a whole new category. Our new model encompasses all the qualities you would expect from a Lunar product and has been designed as a multi-purpose leisure vehicle which is compact, economical and fuel efficient so can genuinely

be used as both an everyday car as well as a holiday getaway.

"We are extremely excited about launching this product into a segment of the motorhome market that is continuing to grow significantly. Complementing our existing caravan range, we are confident we have a unique proposition and that the Vacanza represents a great opportunity for 2013," Brian added.

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 57 Reg Ford Ka £3795 or £23 pw	 55 Reg Astra Est £3495 or £21 pw	 62 Reg Megane DCI £12495 or £59 pw

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Lamborghinis are the superstars of this Italian party

By Matt Kimberley

AN average British tourist wandering through Bologna last month might have wondered what all the fuss – and noise – was about.

If they'd have timed it just right, say about 3pm, they'd have witnessed dozens of Lamborghinis tearing through the city streets under police escort, with thousands of Lamborghini fans standing street-side with flags, banners and cameras.

This was the scene as the final leg of the Grande Giro Lamborghini 50th Anniversary tour got under way. And our average British tourist probably wouldn't have been interested past the novelty of seeing so many loud, (occasionally) obnoxious sports cars in one place.

And yet, as I observed from the driver's seat of a Gallardo Spyder LP 570-4 Performante, the Italians were going crazy for the show being staged for them.

There was a depth of passion and joy that you just wouldn't see in the UK. Frankly, it was brilliant.

Flags

As part of a convoy, I snaked my way out of the city and across an expanse of countryside, guiding the Performante through a few overtakes as the angry bark of the V10 behind me left car after car in its wake.

One thing was constant though, and that was the crowd.

Fans were everywhere, tripods at the ready, arms waving and grins spreading wide as the other drivers and I tore past.

I don't know of any British event quite like the Grande Giro. Of all the enthusiasts at a UK car show, how many would bother to stand out on the street waving flags and taking pictures if a few dozen Aston Martins were to go past?

How many would even know it was an Aston Martin anniversary in the first place? Precious few, no doubt.

There is, and has been for some time in Britain, an air of distaste around supercars and it's totally unfair.

I was recently driving a Ferrari 458 Spider just outside Bristol, minding my own business, overtaking an old Nissan Primera, when the bearded man inside made an offensive hand gesture out of his window, for no reason whatsoever.

I wasn't speeding, tailgating or anything else that might have provoked such a reaction.

In Italy, drive an Italian supercar and people actively let you into gaps. People honk their horns in praise and flash the thumbs-up.

The rumour mill says that even the police treat you with more restraint if you're in something like a Lamborghini.

You wouldn't play a fine piano concerto in a monkey enclosure at the zoo because they wouldn't appreciate it. For bellowing out the Lamborghini symphony, there's simply nowhere better than Italy.



Lamborghini's line up in the main square in Bologna, Italy as part of their 50th anniversary tour



Crowds applaud at the final leg of the Grande Giro Lamborghini 50th Anniversary tour in Bologna



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- 1 Family
- 2 Leisure Time
- 3 Home & Services
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- 5 Business & Farming
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WESTIE CROSS Scottie puppies, ideal family pet, brilliant temperament, non mauling. 07949 652806.

WESTIE CROSS Scottie puppies, ideal family pet, brilliant temperament, non mauling. 07949 652806.

YORKSHIRE TERRIER cross Chihuahua pups, (Chorkies), parents can be seen, £250. All colours, female for re-homing, £175. 07442 179422 or 01902 276433.

5 Business & Farming

business opportunities

commercial premises

UNITS TO LET
1300 Sq Ft. Rowley Regis (New Electric)
4500sq ft, Brierley Hill Town
Good Rates. Contact anytime
and please leave message
01746 710179.

farm machinery

6 Property

accommodation to let

NOTICE TO READERS It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

BEDSITS, Penn/Compton areas. No DSS. Clean, quiet, well maintained, with laundry facilities.
Telephone 07768 687831.

BLACKHEATH, 1 bed flat, GCH, DG, £38pw, no DSS.
Telephone 01384 824311.

DUDLEY GORNAL border, 2 bed semi, kitchen, lounge, lovely condition, off street parking, no smokers, no pets, £510pcm. 07772 624690.

LARGE 2 BED FLAT, Sedgley Beagon, parking, £105pw.
Telephone 07655 725639.

LODGER, Dudley, large furnished room, suit mature working, all facilities £50pw. 07851 608515.

NETHERTON Area, 2 and 3 bed houses to let, no pets, DHSS welcome. Phone 07780 704435.

OFF TETTENHALL ROAD, clean 2 bed flat, CH, DG, off road parking £112pw. 01902 340073.

ONE BED FLAT, Sedgley, suit single, mature person, no DSS. Refs. £75pw. 01902 892239.

ONE BEDROOM FIRST FLOOR FLAT TO LET
Queen's Court, Cannock Road, lounge, dining room, kitchen, bathroom, balcony, central heating, £425 pcm.
07970 835891.

PENN, 3 bed house, DG, CH, fully carpeted.
Telephone 07955 232733.

TWO BED HOUSE Wordsley, garage, parking, easy access Mer-ryhill, furnished/unfurnished, no smokers, pets, DSS or children. References and documents required, £575 exl pcm. 07881 715388.

WANTED OLD MOTORBIKE
Scooter or Honda 50/70/90. Any condition, for restoration project.
07796 402136. 01952 460749.

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MOBILE HOME COVEN
2 beds, nice bathroom, kitchen/diner, lovely lounge, nice garden and lovely views.
£80.00 or offers.
01902 703570 or 01902 791998

overseas property

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments.

accommodation wanted

BUNGALOW WANTED
to rent, long lease required, detached, two bedrooms, for retired couple, Halesowen / Dudley area.
Good References available.
0121 5011301, 07831 912867.

properties wanted

HOUSE OR BUNGALOW
In Telford, or Burslem or Wolverhampton area. Post war detached or semi with south facing level rear garden and garage. Up to £180,000.
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01902 753497.

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7 Jobs

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cars under £1500

BMW 318 CONVERTIBLE, 1999, power/door, a/c, parking sensors, blue/blue hood, excellent condition, £2,995. 01582 710289.

BMW 320CI SE Convertible, auto, 2004, 56k miles, fsh, silver, black leather, fully loaded, £5,200 one. 07941 649991.

BMW 330CI CLUBSPORT 98k miles, full CLUBSPORT leather interior, silver, full electrics, abs, full con, MoT and tax, well looked after by lady owner. £4,500. 07515 283544.

BMW E36 CABRIOLET Full leather, alloy wheels, full MoT, 80,000 miles, includes personalised number plate, quick sale.
£1,600
07774 271432.

CITROEN BERLINGO 1.3 diesel, W reg, electric front to back sunroof, CD, tax, MoT October, £650 one. 01902 823733/07927 564015

CITROEN C3 1.4 DESIRE 07 reg, 57,000 miles, FSH, 5dr, grey, alloys, 12 months MoT, CD player, excellent condition, inside and out.
£2,995.
07534 409404.

CITROEN C8, good metal grey, 2 litre, automatic, 8 seats, MoT and tax, £2,700 one. 07890 508142.

FIAT PUNTO 1.2 dynamic 3 door 2008 57 plate, 16,000 miles, black, electric windows, MoT, central locking, tax, stereo, CD, £3,500
07850 894657

FORD KA 2005 plate, 73,000 miles, 6 months tax, MoT middle September, lady owner, good condition £1,800 one. 07923 270914.

FORD MONDEO TITANIUM, 2.0 diesel, 57 reg, full MoT, tax, history, excellent condition, £5,695. 01902 562338 or 07831 868858.

FORD MUSTANG, 1983, gear 2800, v6, red, £2,800.
Telephone 01543 686777.

FORD RANGER THUNDER XLT
2500 T/C, 2006, 88,000 miles, silver, abs, electric windows, air bag, electric mirror, air con, fsh, alarm, MoT, metallic paint, central locking, one owner, pas, diesel, tax, alloys, stereo, CD, leather interior, Bluetooth built in, very good condition.
£4,750.
07850 752988.

HONDA CBR 600 1998, taxed, MoT'd, very good condition, low miles sold with extras. £1,700 one. 07943 120733.

HYUNDAI TUCSON 4x4, 2008, excellent condition, 11 months MoT, tax fsh, 42k top of the range, £7,500 one. 07864 162822.

JAGUAR X TYPE 2.5 2002 full MoT, tax, very good condition must be seen £1,600 01922 479743

8 Motoring

MAZDA 6, diesel, 2005, Estate, fsh, leather, 10 months MoT, one owner, cruise control, very good condition, £2,550 one. 07761 532710.

MAZDA MX5 ROADSTER MK2, 1999, MoT April 2014, immaculate, B.R.G. serviced/garaged, £2,100. 0121 384 7888.

MAZDA RX8
2007 57 Reg., 34,000 miles, red, Bose 6 CD player, red and black heated leather seats, tax, MoT, climate control, FSH, immaculate condition.
£3,895 one.
07944 610707.

MERCEDES E200, 2003, silver, auto, 10 months MoT, one owner, cruise control, very good condition, £3,750 one. 01746 763578.

MERCEDES 230 CLK
Sport Kompressor, auto., convertible, silver, all mod cons, very good condition, any trial.
£2,500 one.
07411 958454
01902 256314.

LUXURY MOTOR

MERCEDES BENZ C200 KOMPRESSOR
2002, 82,500 miles, silver, 1.8 litre, silver 2002, abs, full electrics, 11 months MoT, petrol, manual.
£2,500 one.
Telephone 07803 798431.

MERCEDES ML350 CDI SPORT
AMG body styling, 60 reg, Calcutte White, 21" alloys, Memory package. Hands free telephone.
Airmatic suspension.
Command navigation.
Parking sensors.
Pristine condition. FSH.
Still under manufacturers warranty until November 13.
£31,999.
07836 204450 or e mail deolsuk@hotmail.co.uk

MERCEDES SLK 320, 2003, Auto, silver, service history, taxed, MoT, good condition £1,450 one. 01384 233255, or 07951 598774.

MGB CLASSIC ROADSTER lovely condition, £5,200.
Please call for details.
07831 514366

MICROCAR M GO, 2010, MoT July, tax to end July, good condition, £6,500.
Telephone 01384 486036.

MITSUBISHI SPACE STAR 2005
1.9, DID/S, 5 door diesel, FSH, 60,000 miles, just serviced, R/L E/W, S/R, A/C, A/W, MoT June 2014, tax February 2014.
£2,495. 07788 990608 (barnminster)

PEUGEOT 107 URBAN LITE, 60 plate, 2011, red, 37,000 miles, 2 owners, fsh, good condition, £3,500. 07821 601953.

PEUGEOT 206 Quicksilver, 1.4, 54 reg, 17ms black alloy, 49,000 miles, four months MoT, good condition, £1,600. 0121 5202173

RENAULT CLIO CAMPUS SPORT
3-dr hatch, blue, 57 plate, lady owner from new, 7,000 miles, service history, tax till Sep, full MoT, excellent condition.
£3,500 one.
Oldbury 0121 532 5950.

SKODA FABIA 1.2 HTPi, 59reg, met red, one lady owner, 15k, 2 services, tax/MoT Sep. Excellent condition. £4,900. 07967 656292.

S-TYPE JAGUAR SE 2.5 Auto, 2003, 6 months tax, MoT, 86k, immaculate throughout, must be seen, £3,000. 07593 708640.

SUBARU FORESTER, 05 plate, nice condition, 12 months MoT, s/fh, £3,000 one.
Telephone 01299 861857.

SUZUKI WAGON R+ 1.3, 2005, red, MoT April 2014, FSH, immaculate condition throughout, £2,150. 07754 294799.

TRIUMPH BONNEVILLE 60 LIMITED EDITION
2010, 2,500 dry miles, never been in rain, as new condition, with screen and gel pad seat.
£4,750 firm.
07813 163294 or 01902

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 SXi, 2004, black, 62,000 miles, 12 months MoT, £1,950. 01384 288377.

MITSUBISHI SPACE STAR 2005
1.9, DID/S, 5 door diesel, FSH, 60,000 miles, just serviced, R/L E/W, S/R, A/C, A/W, MoT June 2014, tax February 2014.
£2,495. 07788 990608 (barnminster)

PEUGEOT 107 URBAN LITE, 60 plate, 2011, red, 37,000 miles, 2 owners, fsh, good condition, £3,500. 07821 601953.

PEUGEOT 206 Quicksilver, 1.4, 54 reg, 17ms black alloy, 49,000 miles, four months MoT, good condition, £1,600. 0121 5202173

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Oldbury 0121 532 5950.

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S-TYPE JAGUAR SE 2.5 Auto, 2003, 6 months tax, MoT, 86k, immaculate throughout, must be seen, £3,000. 07593 708640.

SUBARU FORESTER, 05 plate, nice condition, 12 months MoT, s/fh, £3,000 one.
Telephone 01299 861857.

SUZUKI WAGON R+ 1.3, 2005, red, MoT April 2014, FSH, immaculate condition throughout, £2,150. 07754 294799.

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2010, 2,500 dry miles, never been in rain, as new condition, with screen and gel pad seat.
£4,750 firm.
07813 163294 or 01902

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 SXi, 2004, black, 62,000 miles, 12 months MoT, £1,950. 01384 288377.

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.3i, 1999, low insurance, red, 61k, long MoT, sunroof, reliable car, £700 no offers. 07939 957956.

NISSAN MICRA Profile, 16v, 1999, 64,400 miles, red, MoT, pass, £700. 07508 343422.

PEUGEOT 206 1.4 LX, 48,000 miles, new battery and exhaust, 6 months tax, 7 months MoT, mint condition inside, £950 one. 07499 100212.

PEUGEOT 306 Roland Garros, 1.6, M reg, green, cream, fsh, leather, red leather interior, 5975 one. Telephone 01384 370150.

RENAULT CLIO Dynamique, 2004, 48,000 miles, MoT and 6 months tax, £1,400 one. 07897 427447.

RENAULT MEGANE 1.4, 1998, immaculate, 63,000 miles, tax, MoT, £375. 07523 168466.

ROVER 45 5-dr hatchback, 1.8, black, 35k miles, long MoT, excellent condition, £1,200.
01902 738426.

SKODA FELICIA 1.3, T reg, 5-door, blue, full MoT, taxed, 61k, sunroof, stereo, economical, £495.
07964 350386.

SUZUKI BALENO, blue, 1.6, MoT, tax, 65k miles, £700 one. Telephone 07500 743675.

TOYOTA RAV 4, 98, 103k, tax and MoT to January, black, 2.0L petrol, CL, R reg, 071006.

VAUXHALL CORSA CLD 1.0, 2002, 88,000 miles, MoT Feb 2014, tax July 2013, £1,000 one.
07825 232772.

VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 7 seater club, 2001, tax, 65k miles, lovely condition £775. 07967 101006.

VOLVO 960, 2.3, 1995, silver, long MoT, tax, CD, petrol, £650, one. 01384 823525.

LANDROVER DISCOVERY TDS XS DIESEL
105k miles, metallic grey, FSH, 9 months MoT, tax till June, half leather, new engine fitted in 2008.
£5,450 one.
01384 256090.

LANDROVER FREELANDER TD4, 06 reg, 5dr Est, grey, diesel, manual, pas, TC, alloys, audio remote control, immobiliser, 11 months MoT, 4 months tax, 46k with history, EW, EM, AC, CD, £7,495 one.
07966 388773 W-ton

MAZDA 6, diesel, 2005, Estate, fsh, leather, 10 months MoT, one owner, cruise control, very good condition, £2,550 one. 07761 532710.

MAZDA MX5 ROADSTER MK2, 1999, MoT April 2014, immaculate, B.R.G. serviced/garaged, £2,100. 0121 384 7888.

MAZDA RX8
2007 57 Reg., 34,000 miles, red, Bose 6 CD player, red and black heated leather seats, tax, MoT, climate control, FSH, immaculate condition.
£3,895 one.
07944 610707.

MERCEDES E200, 2003, silver, auto, 10 months MoT, one owner, cruise control, very good condition, £3,750 one. 01746 763578.

MERCEDES 230 CLK
Sport Kompressor, auto., convertible, silver, all mod cons, very good condition, any trial.
£2,500 one.
07411 958454
01902 256314.

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 SXi, 2004, black, 62,000 miles, 12 months MoT, £1,950. 01384 288377.

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.3i, 1999, low insurance, red, 61k, long MoT, sunroof, reliable car, £700 no offers. 07939 957956.

NISSAN MICRA Profile, 16v, 1999, 64,400 miles, red, MoT, pass, £700. 07508 343422.

PEUGEOT 206 1.4 LX, 48,000 miles, new battery and exhaust, 6 months tax, 7 months MoT, mint condition inside, £950 one. 07499 100212.

PEUGEOT 306 Roland Garros, 1.6, M reg, green, cream, fsh, leather, red leather interior, 5975 one. Telephone 01384 370150.

RENAULT CLIO Dynamique, 2004, 48,000 miles, MoT and 6 months tax, £1,400 one. 07897 427447.

RENAULT MEGANE 1.4, 1998, immaculate, 63,000 miles, tax, MoT, £375. 07523 168466.

ROVER 45 5-dr hatchback, 1.8, black, 35k miles, long MoT, excellent condition, £1,200.
01902 738426.

SKODA FELICIA 1.3, T reg, 5-door, blue, full MoT, taxed, 61k, sunroof, stereo, economical, £495.
07964 350386.

SUZUKI BALENO, blue, 1.6, MoT, tax, 65k miles, £700 one. Telephone 07500 743675.

TOYOTA RAV 4, 98, 103k, tax and MoT to January, black, 2.0L petrol, CL, R reg, 071006.

VAUXHALL CORSA CLD 1.0, 2002, 88,000 miles, MoT Feb 2014, tax July 2013, £1,000 one.
07825 232772.

VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 7 seater club, 2001, tax, 65k miles, lovely condition £775. 07967 101006.

VOLVO 960, 2.3, 1995, silver, long MoT, tax, CD, petrol, £650, one. 01384 823525.

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.2 SXi, 2004, black, 62,000 miles, 12 months MoT, £1,950. 01384 288377.

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.3i, 1999, low insurance, red, 61k, long MoT, sunroof, reliable car, £700 no offers. 07939 957956.

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RENAULT CLIO Dynamique, 2004, 48,000 miles, MoT and 6 months tax, £1,400 one. 07897 427447.

RENAULT MEGANE 1.4, 1998, immaculate, 63,000 miles, tax, MoT, £375. 07523 168466.

ROVER 45 5-dr hatchback, 1.8, black, 35k miles, long MoT, excellent condition, £1,200.
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SKODA FELICIA 1.3, T reg, 5-door, blue, full MoT, taxed, 61k, sunroof, stereo, economical, £495.
07964 350386.

SUZUKI BALENO, blue, 1.6, MoT, tax, 65k miles, £700 one. Telephone 07500 743675.

TOYOTA RAV 4, 98, 103k, tax and MoT to January, black, 2.0L petrol, CL, R reg, 071006.

VAUXHALL CORSA CLD 1.0, 2002, 88,000 miles, MoT Feb 2014, tax July 2013, £1,000 one.
07825 232772.

VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 7 seater club, 2001, tax

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Saturday Night from £129.⁹⁵

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Theatre Showstopper from £189.⁹⁵

Theatre Weekend from £189.⁹⁵

These popular theatre packages to the West End depart from Birmingham New Street, Shrewsbury, Stafford or Wolverhampton on the Friday morning returning on the Sunday afternoon/early evening. Standard class travel is included with the option to upgrade. Two nights stay at a three or four-star London hotel of your choice (hotel supplements may apply) and a top priced ticket for a Friday evening performance for the Theatre Showstopper package or choose your price band for the Saturday evening performance with the Theatre Weekend package.

*The "from" price and price bands vary for each show – see brochure for details.
Single room supplements apply.

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classic cars

TOYOTA MR2 Mk1, 1989, red, immaculate condition / original, one lady owner, 40,000 miles, £4,000 ono. 01785 940065

commercial vehicles

FORD TRANSIT VAN 2004, excellent runner, taxed and MoT'd, £2,100. 07534 519464.

PEUGEOT PARTNER van, 1.9 diesel, 1996, 138,000, MoT / tax Nov, very reliable, smart interior. £450. 07570 659149.

TRANSIT PICKUP tipper, 05, 35cwt, 98,000 miles, 10 months MoT. £3,250 ono. 01384 395614.

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01543 660120 / 0121 564 0090
01902 580065

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motorbikes

AJS-CRAZY 500cc scooter, tax till next Feb, £800 ono.
Ring for details 07914 386453.

HONDA CBR 600i1998, taxed, MoT'd, very good condition. Low mileage. Sold with extras. £1,700 ono. 07943 120733.

KYMCO AGILITY 125, June 2012, silver, immaculate, under 2,000 miles, fsh, warranty, must sell hence £950 ono. 07941 649991.

SUZUKI BANDIT, 1999, GS£600, 12,000 miles, vgc, new back tyre, full service history, MoT July. £1,500 ono. 01839 250870.

SUZUKI GSXR 1000 K6 10k, 12 months tax, 6 months MoT, blue and white, excellent condition. £5,000 o.n.o. 07879 453448.

SUZUKI INTRUDERVS600 GL, 1996, 8,000 dry miles, mint condition, taxed, MoT'd. £1,900 ono. 07954 177136 / 01902 675203.

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01902 562154 or 07956 447567.

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07831 245313

spares & accessories

accessories & services

mobile mechanics

MOBILE MECHANICS Service & repairs, Headgasket, clutches and cambelts. 07747 548469.

9 Local Information

public & legal notices

KENNETH ERNEST ALLEN (Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the aforementioned deceased, late of 47 Mincing Lane Rowley Regis B65 9QF, who died on 10/11/2012, are required to send particulars thereof in writing to the undersigned on or before 16/08/2013, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests of which they have had notice.

NORTHWOOD BANKS & CO
1600 Coventry Road Yardley
Birmingham B26 1AL 7380807

IN THE MATTER OF HUGHES GARAGES (DUDLEY) LIMITED

(Company Number: 1618860)

IN THE MATTER OF THE INSOLVENCY ACT AND RULES 1986

In accordance with Rule 4, 106, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT Frank Anthony Hatch of F A Hatch & Co, of Castle View, 48 Salop Street, Dudley, West Midlands DY1 3XJ, (telephone number: 01384 458382) was appointed Liquidator of the above named Company by its Members and Creditors on Tuesday 14th May 2013.

Dated this 14TH DAY OF MAY 2013
Frank A Hatch
FRANK ANTHONY HATCH LIQUIDATOR

LEGAL / PUBLIC NOTICES

For convenience you may fax any advertising requirements to

Marie Hogg on
01902 713146
or email marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk

(remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

10 Personals

personal

ATTRACTIVE YOUNG 72 YEAR OLD LADY

WLTm a gentleman of similar age for friendship/companionship, enjoys dining out, holidays.

Photo appreciated and returned.
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GENTLEMAN YOUNG 71

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Maritz in blitz with bat to set up victory

Lichfield 242, Wednesbury 243-8. Wednesbury won by two wickets

SOUTH AFRICAN star Jacobus Vorster Maritz struck 144 – 90 of them in boundaries – as Wednesbury claimed a thrilling two-wicket win at home to Lichfield.

The hosts have endured a frustrating start to the Staffs Clubs Premier Division season, but stunned the visitors to grab their first win in a high-scoring game.

Batting first, Lichfield were bowled out for 242, with Australian Riley Ward falling just one run short of a century. He was one of six victims for Harish Patel, who finished with 6-72.

The hosts' hopes of chasing down the total looked unlikely as James Sarginson quickly removed opener Carl Baker (2) and then Gary Owen for a duck.

But Maritz turned the game as he struck five sixes in a superb innings to set up the win, though it took a calm, unbeaten 13 from Andy Warner to see the hosts over the line after James Wilkinson (4-47) had taken late wickets.

Skipper Bai Matharu said Maritz had been feeling under the weather in the days leading up to the game.

He said: "We've told him he can be ill all the time if it means he goes out and plays like that."

"It was brilliant innings of controlled aggression; he is a real class act."

"It's a huge win for us, Lichfield were my favourites to win the league at the start of the season."

Birch moves to Cradley

CRADLEY TOWN are taking Nigel Birch and Ian Broad into their management structure.

Newly-appointed boss Marcus McDonald made the move, having previously worked with Birch at Highgate United.

He has brought in Birch to be joint manager and Broad to act as first team head coach.

McDonald will also continue in his role of general manager.

Birch joins from Black Country Rangers, who finished in the top five of the West Midlands League last season and also retained the JW Hunt Cup.



Tom Stokes, left, lands a shot on Bheki Moyo at Walsall
Picture: Robert Ellis Photography/UKO Boxing

Winning start for Stokes

Boxing

WEST BROMWICH'S Tom Stokes opened his professional boxing account with a debut points victory over Bheki Moyo in front of the BoxNation cameras at Walsall Town Hall, writes **Craig Birch**.

The former Wodensborough ABC amateur, the younger brother of junior ABA champion Josh, was punching for pay for the first time last Friday night.

He was one half of the second fight on the card against South African-born Londoner Bheki Moyo, a 38-year-old stalwart of the ring.

Stokes started off solidly and caught the eye for the first time in round three, Moyo walking straight onto a right uppercut from the 18-year-old

welterweight. He then had the reaction to repel a forceful attack from Moyo in response and stayed on his toes, dropping just a share of a round in a 40-37 points win.

Former amateur club-mate Des Bowater, a 21-year-old super featherweight from Wolverhampton, also turned pro on the same bill and opened the show.

And he soon doubling up his punches with combinations to the body, with Stupart firing back with uppercuts that rarely found the target.

Bowater stayed behind his jab and

regularly popped it out to fend off his opponent as Stupart tried to make the fight scrappy, taking a shut-out points victory by 40-36 after four rounds.

In the main bout, Walsall's Martin Gethin saw his IBF world lightweight title dream turn into a nightmare after a final eliminator stoppage defeat to Ammeth Diaz.

The British champion was dropped three times by the Panamanian puncher before he was counted out in the seventh round.

Walsall's Christopher Keane saw his unbeaten record go up in smoke as he failed to take Neil Dawson's WBO inter-continental cruiserweight title from him.

First-night challenge looks tough for Musto

HALESOWEN'S Michael Musto could have to fight tooth and nail to progress past the first night of 'the FA Cup of darts' after the luck of the draw threw up a difficult path.

The 146-player PDC UK Open starts at the home of Bolton Wanderers, the Reebok Stadium, tonight in front of the Sky Sports cameras through to the third round.

Tournament sponsors Speedy Services held a series of open qualifiers to decide on 32 players for the tournament, including one at Wolverhampton Civic Hall in April.

That's where Musto qualified by hitting a high score of 421 in a 15-dart challenge, before beating Andrew Bray in a best-of-three-legs game of 501.

The IT technician first faces tricky German Bernd Roith in the preliminary round and will be back to play two-time BDO world champion Ted Hankey if he progresses.

The 47-year-old plays his pub league darts for the Malt Shovel and Shakespeare, both in Dudley.

He said: "I have been playing darts since I was 13, so it's great to get through. I have got a lot of friends who play in the PDC and I'm looking forward to getting to Bolton."

Three fellow open qualifiers from Wolverhampton are in action. Dean Stewart is in the preliminary round against Terry Dunford.

Gavin Baker and Darrell Thorpe, both from Bilston, will compete in the preliminary and first rounds respec-

by Craig Birch



Michael Musto - tough draw

tively. But that may not favour Thorpe. He will play the winner of the preliminary tie between BDO world championship regular Stephen Bunting and Kirk Shepherd.

Elsewhere on the opening night, West Bromwich's Steve Farmer is up against Chris Aubrey, while Bloxwich's Matthew Dennant will play Darrell Townsend.

An all-West Midlands clash between Wolverhampton's Wayne Jones and Stourbridge's Nick Fullwell will be in the preliminary round. Jones and Fullwell could play three times in one night.

Heathens' Starke stars as Hitmen knocked out

Dudley 55 Buxton 39

DUDLEY star Paul Starke's 16 points put the Heathens in charge of their National League Knockout Cup tie.

The Malvern racer endured a tough 2012, but has enjoyed a sensational start to the current campaign after moving to the former Cradley club.

He gave a classy display at Monmore Green to lead his side to a comfortable victory over the Hitmen and leave them well-placed ahead of the second leg at Buxton on June 23.

Starke said: "It was a really good night for myself and a good result for the team."

"Everything is going brilliantly for me at the moment and it's been a great start to my time at the club."

"I felt as if I was going a bit stale last year and my career wasn't moving in the right direction. Since I've come here I've got my spark back, I feel rejuvenated and I'm enjoying myself more than ever."

Starke received some tremendous support from unlikely sources – with Max Clegg and Gareth Isherwood both contributing double figures with exciting displays. Skipper



Dan Greenwood inadvertently takes out Hitman Tom Woolley. Pictures: John Hipkiss

Ashley Morris also put in a strong display from the No.1 position to form a formidable top four which accounted for 11 race wins.

Buxton's Tom Woolley made an unscheduled departure over the safety fence after being caught by Dan Greenwood, but was unhurt.

Dudley 55: Paul Starke 16, Gareth Isherwood 12+2, Max Clegg 11+1, Ashley Morris 11+1, Nathan Greaves 4+1, Dan Greenwood 1+1, Lewis Blackbird R/R.

Buxton 39: Charles Wright 15, Adam McKenna 9, Tony Atkin 8, Tom Woolley 5+3, Matt Williamson 2, Tyler Govier 0, Ryan Blacklock R/R.



Woolley disappears over the Monmore safety fence

Wickets fall then last pair hold out

Brockhampton 225-8, WB Dartmouth 173-9. Draw

AFTER last week's thrilling successful run chase against Himley, Dartmouth were left clinging on against Birmingham and District Premier table-toppers Brockhampton.

Dartmouth's in-form openers Kadeer Ali (65) and Basit Ali (24) gave the home side a good start to their reply after limiting Brockhampton to 225-8.

But from 100-1 they collapsed, and, although Zee-shan Asif batted well for 37, they were soon nine down before youngsters Brinder Phagura (eight not out) and Jack Hobbs (two not out) held on for the draw.

Brockhampton 259-8, WB Dartmouth 121-8. Draw

For the seconds, it was a similar story to the firsts.

Anaesh Patel took 3-59 in Brockhampton's innings, but Max Porter (89) and Glyn Harry (86) ensured a big total for the home side.

Dartmouth never threatened and it took 20 not out from skipper Hiren Patel to steer the tail to a draw.

WB Dartmouth 166-5, Wolverhampton 172-0. Wolverhampton won by 10 wickets

Dartmouth thirds were comprehensively beaten by Wolverhampton.

Adil Jiva (34) and Gurbhje Singh (60) formed the backbone of Dartmouth's total.

But Satinder Singh's 92 not out led Wolverhampton to a comprehensive win. **Penn 185-7, WB D'mouth 78-6. Draw**

Dartmouth fourths lost early wickets in their reply to Penn's total, but held on for a draw.

On Saturday, Dartmouth firsts visit local rivals Walsall.

Old Hill too hot to hold

OLD HILL demolished Ombersley by 114 runs in Division One of the Birmingham and District Premier.

Old Hill hit 245-7, thanks in part to Nitesh Patel's 83. Ombersley were reduced to 8-4 at one stage but dug in to achieve respectability on 131. Nigel Davenport claimed 4-20.

Also in Division One, Smethwick took a battling draw with Moseley after they hit 224-8 in response to Moseley's 260-8.

Nagaash Tahir top-scored with 71.



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Tom triumph
Stokes opens pro
career with a win
Page 39



Big night
Musto's tough task
in 'FA Cup of darts'
Page 39

e-mail: chronsport@expressandstar.co.uk

Wins in final four cut size of defeat

**Kings Heath Park 226
The George 203**

NO FEWER than 10 county players appeared in this high-quality Warwick and Worcester Premier Division One match.

But The George were squeezed out by 23 shots at the green of the second-placed team.

The Warley bowlers had only one winner in the first four, Alan Belcher carding a 21-9 victory, and Kings Heath Park built up a 16-shot advantage.

The second four also produced only one away winner, Shane Day edging through 21-20 as the home side's margin went out to 30 shots. Three winners in the final round - Jamie Dunn (21-15), Steve Dicken (21-17) and Paul Hemming (21-18) - cut the margin.

**The George 223
Victoria Park 195**

The seconds had a 28-shot home win in the South Staffs Premier.

They started slowly and trailed their Stafford visitors by 10 shots after the first four with Martin McGuinness (21-10) the only home winner.

But wins in the second four from Ray Broadfield (21-10), Chris Simpson (21-13) and Neil Hopwood (21-14) put them eight shots up.

With all to play for, The George won all four games in the back section through Will Freeman (21-14), Mark Atkins (21-15), Paddy McGuinness (21-16) and Adrian Ford (21-19).

**The George 250
Drakes Drum 163**

The thirds had a resounding 87-shot home win in Warwick and Worcester Alliance Division Three, losing only one game in the match on Saturday.

Some big home victors included Chris Lambert (21-5), Jim Anderson (21-2) and Joe Arnott (21-6).

Rowe picked to take over Town

TIPTON TOWN have appointed Ian Rowe as their new manager.

The former Gornal Athletic and Dudley Town boss takes over the Midland Alliance side from Ian Long.

Rowe led Gornal to a club-record third place in the Alliance last season and the FA Vase quarter-finals.

He will be joined by assistant manager Lee Rolfe. Rowe said: "I think most involved with the club realise a new chapter is needed, to shake things up."

Pledge to find future British stars

Speedway

Excellence initiative, will be officially launched in the autumn.

It is a major initiative for the former Cradley Heath rider who still lives in the Black Country and was coach at National League Dudley last season.

The scheme, which is being run in line with the government's action sports Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting

Under the terms of the

scheme it will be open to anyone between the ages of 16 and 18.

Both the Speedway Control Bureau and the British Speedway Promoters' Association have given the project their official approval.

Fans and sponsors can get involved with full details on the academic and practical courses plus the supporters' membership scheme at www.speedwayacademy.co.uk

Pedersen said: "As a Dane, I am obviously aware of how suc-

cessful my nation has been in producing riders through youth training and taking them to world individual titles and World Team Cup victories.

"British speedway has needed a comparative structure for decades and I am pleased to play my part.

"I must stress that the scheme is not only open to riders in the sport's under-16 championship, but riders from other motorcycle disciplines such as motocross and road racing."



Jan O Pedersen with a race jacket from his first year in Britain at the Cradley Heathens

Heroes of past will join the party

IT'S 30 years since Cradley Heathens swept the floor with their opponents in one of the most stunning seasons in their proud history.

And two members of that side, plus team boss Peter Adams, will be back together for one night only to celebrate one of the sport's greatest teams.

Jan O Pedersen started his career with the Dudley Wood side in 1983 and Alan Grahame - 'Big Al' - made almost 800 appearances for the club.

Both will be on stage alongside Adams, the most successful team manager in British speedway history who led Cradley to British League titles in 1981 and 83.

The event, which has only 150 tickets available, takes place at Cradley Heath Liberal Club, High Street, Cradley Heath, on Friday, August 23.

There will also be an auction of a replica 1983 race jacket signed by team members Pedersen, Grahame, Erik Gundersen and Simon Cross along with Adams and Cradley legend Greg Hancock. Billy Hamill is also expected to sign, meaning four Cradley world champions will be on the jacket.

Heathens chairman Nigel Pearson said: "I was a season ticket holder at Cradley in 83 and every member of that team was my hero. This will be a great night."

Tickets cost £10 and are available from the Dudley Heathens track shop or the online store www.dudleyheathens.co.uk The night will also feature a souvenir brochure and a disco.

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NO WORRIES OVER CONTRACT - LONG

ALBION striker Shane Long says he is ready to fill the void if Romelu Lukaku leaves The Hawthorns - and insists he is relaxed about his contract talks.

The Ireland international 'fully intends' to stay as negotiations over a contract extension continue.

And the 26-year-old pledged to 'step up to the plate' if the Baggies fail to secure 17-goal top scorer Lukaku on loan from Chelsea for a second season.

Lukaku's future is uncertain while Peter Odemwingie seems set to leave this summer and fellow forward Markus Rosenberg has struggled so far in the Premier League.

Long, who captained Ireland in their 4-0 friendly win against Georgia at the weekend, said: "Will Romelu be back? I don't know.

"He scored 17 goals and it's going to be hard to replace. Maybe it's my time to step up to the plate."

Long insists he is not worried about his contract talks dragging on and is happy to wait for a new deal.

Happy

He has a year left on his current agreement plus an option for a further season and has been in talks for months over an extension, without a breakthrough.

He said: "I'm very happy there (at Albion). I fully intend to stay but we will see what happens.

"There are a few lads up in the air about contracts and it will be interesting to see what happens over the summer.

"I have a year and an option, so probably two.

"I have still got two years left at West Brom and that's what I am focusing on at the moment."

For much of last season, Long had to share striking

by Steve Madeley

duties with Lukaku as boss Steve Clarke preferred to play with a lone striker.

He ended the campaign with eight goals in the Premier League and 11 in all competitions.

He also scored a stunner against England last week in the 1-1 draw at Wembley.

Long said: "The manager said to me at the end of the season he was very happy with how I had done.

"We understood our roles and shared the load up front. More than likely, we went with one striker and it was either me or him."

Meanwhile, Albion have been placed on transfer alert after long-time target Ola Toivonen set his sights on a cut-price exit from PSV Eindhoven.

The 26-year-old forward, who has been on the Baggies' radar for several years, has been threatened with exile to the PSV reserves after refusing to discuss a contract extension with the Dutch club. And that is likely to interest the Baggies, who are long admirers of the Sweden international.

Toivonen, who can play up front, as an attacking midfielder or as a winger, is open to the idea of moving to England.



Can't hear you - Shane Long, right, celebrates scoring the opening goal of the game against England at Wembley

Work to do as Clarke seeks a bigger squad

BOSS Steve Clarke reckons Albion need a bigger squad as he hinted their lack of depth was exposed in his first season in charge.

The Baggies head coach believes he needs a boost for his second campaign at the helm as he continues to weigh up potential summer transfer targets.

Clarke oversaw Albion's best ever Premier League season but saw his side fall away after Christmas following a

flying start. "There is a lot of work to be done over the summer," he said. "We have to look at the squad and look to boost it to give it more help.

"In the second half of the season we saw how light we were as a squad. "We need more quality players and we probably need a slightly bigger squad."

Clarke was returning this week following a family holiday and is expected to get a progress report on potential transfer

deals. He is also likely to seek talks in the next few days with his friend and returning Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho over the future of Romelu Lukaku.

Meanwhile, Clarke believes he will learn from the difficult end to Albion's season, which saw them win just four of their last 19 league games. He said: "The second half of the season has been more difficult and challenging and probably, in a perverse kind of way, more enjoyable."

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